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BIBLE CRITICISM AND THE AVERAGE MAN

HOWARD AGNEW JOHNSTON



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**BIBLE CRITICISM
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BIBLE CRITICISM AND THE AVERAGE MAN

BY

Howard Agnew Johnston, Ph.D., D.D.

Author of

"GOD'S METHODS OF TRAINING WORKERS"



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TO MY MOTHER

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INTRODUCTION

A POPULAR hand-book on the subject of Bible Criticism is a wide-spread need. A new generation of Christian young men and women is demanding intelligent discussion of the subject. Their demand is reasonable. They should be informed. As far as possible the story of the movement should be told in plain words for plain people. Above all things else the statement of the case should seek to settle faith, rather than foment doubts and questionings. Such is the task undertaken in this book.

It is time to attempt to measure the real character of the critical movement, to establish its true value, and to fix a definite attitude toward its various claims. It was necessary to wait until the field has been exploited about as thoroughly as the nature of the movement would allow. That time has practically been reached. Nothing materially new is now appearing, or is likely to ap-

pear, so far as the fundamental theories are concerned.

The plan of the book involves many references to writers in a general way, without giving volume and page. It was deemed wise thus to give a less technical account of opinion. Yet the reference is usually sufficiently specific to allow one who may desire to consult fully the authorities mentioned.

HOWARD AGNEW JOHNSTON.

New York, 1902.

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BIBLE CRITICISM AND THE AVERAGE MAN

I

THE AVERAGE MAN

THE average man is the large factor in any problem which involves the human race. Any theory must find acceptance with him before it can have a permanent place in the general thought of men. The critic is a specialist. He comes as an expert to his task. Thus far the publications which present the subject of Bible Criticism are largely technical in character and intended for those who are scholars trained sufficiently to follow the specialist. Hence the average man has remained in the outer court of the temple, realizing that a discussion has been continued for some years regarding the Scriptures, but not having clear or definite conceptions as to the character of the discussion or its results.

Perhaps this important fact has not been sufficiently recognized by the specialist. It is doubtless proper to concede a certain degree of author-

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ity to an expert just because he is an expert, but Dr. W. J. Beecher is certainly correct when he insists that "in matters of permanent knowledge an expert does not expect to be believed permanently on the ground of his being an expert. He is under obligations to put it into the power of men who are not experts to test his conclusions. He may do this (1) by the practical results he accomplishes. We who ride in trolley cars and use telephones and read by electric light have no doubt that the experts in electricity have studied to some purpose. Or he may (2) do it by placing the reasons before their minds in such shape that they can understand them. In one of these two ways the expert who claims to have discovered something for the benefit of mankind must, within a reasonable time, make his claim good. The public will give him time, will take him provisionally for awhile at his own estimate of himself. But we cannot forever accept him as a mere matter of tradition. He must give us proofs level to our understanding, or he will be consigned to the limbo to which obsolete traditions go."

This is all the more obligatory in view of the fact that the average man discovers the specialists failing to agree with such unanimity as is necessary to inspire confidence in the mind of the general public. When Prof. Roentgen announced the discovery of the X ray, every specialist who experimented along the lines of the dis-

covery was able to verify the claims of the discoverer, and the unanimous testimony of all these specialists left no doubt in the public mind, even before the people began to experience the blessings which the discovery has brought to men. But when Kuenen puts forth one theory of Bible Criticism and Wellhausen refuses to accept it, putting a different one of his own in its place, then the average man hesitates to accept either view. Prof. Addis one of the latest critics, in his book *The Documents of The Hexateuch*, says of the views of Dr. Staerk, another critic: "He heaps conjecture upon conjecture, and they remain mere conjectures notwithstanding his constant assurance that this is 'clear' and that is 'without doubt'" (p. 17). In the face of such differences of opinion among the specialists themselves, the average man cannot resist the feeling that their findings may not be marked by great reliability. The Christian world has been patient with modern critical scholars. The few conspicuous exceptions only mark the fact. The desire for liberty in research is general. We desire all the light possible. The spirit of toleration is increasing. But we do not forget that sanguine people are liable to push a new idea for more than it is worth, and press a new method beyond what it will bear. Therefore if the product of the critic's work shall involve a difficulty at the point of discriminating between speculation and demonstration, the critic must see the

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reasonableness of the hesitation with which the average man considers his views.

The critics have been over-confident about their following, assuming a much greater number in that following than the facts justify, mainly because many who do not agree with their views have not opposed them, but have been tolerant in the desire for liberty of research. We have a significant illustration in a sermon by Dr. Henry van Dyke on *The Bible As It Is*, in which he gives full expression to the spirit of toleration, but says: "As yet I have seen no good reason for thinking that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch, although there are certain portions of it which he could hardly have written, for example the account of his own death and burial; and the prophecies of Isaiah seem to me to be well enough accounted for by the supposition of a single author with two different styles. These opinions may be due to ignorance, but many of the conclusions of the higher criticism present themselves to such literary judgment as I possess in the same aspect of inconclusive dogmatism as the theories of those who would persuade us that the poems of Homer were written by another man of the same name, and that Francis Bacon was the author of Shakespear's plays."

There is another consideration which Mr. Gladstone urges in his book *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*. He reminds us that the Scrip-

ture writings are something more than Hebrew and Greek words, and that they are used with a great purpose, namely, to convey truth to men. He urges that men are bound to judge the trustworthiness of the writings according as they realize the success with which these Scriptures have accomplished their purpose, and adds: "Certainly I can lay no claim to be heard here more than any other person. Yet will I say that any man whose labour and duty for several scores of years have included as their central point the study of the means of making himself intelligible to the mass of men, is, by just so much, in a better position to judge what would be the form and methods of speech proper for the Mosaic writer to adopt, than the most perfect Hebraist as such, or the most consummate votary of natural sciences as such." The critical specialist is only one of several who have to do with the Bible, and the average man has found the book to be more than literature. To him the voice of authority comes from other directions as well as from the student of the literary composition of the book. He desires to be fair. He desires to know the actual product of criticism, but he will cling to long-accepted views, confirmed by precious experience, until convincing evidence leads him to see that the new is really better than the old.

II

THE BIBLE

IT has been said there are three classes of books: the book you read once, the book you read twice, and the book you read every year. But there is one book which remains in a class by itself, to which many thousands resort morning by morning, and evening by evening, for guidance and inspiration, for comfort and peace. Other books, the greatest among them, exhaust their message; but each generation returns to this book and finds it has more to say. Immanuel Kant wrote to a friend: "You do well in that you base your peace and piety on the Gospels, for in the Gospels, in the Gospels alone, is the source of deep spiritual truths, after reason has measured out its whole territory in vain." And he further quotes Goethe as saying: "Let the world progress as much as it likes; let all branches of human research develop to the very utmost; nothing will take the place of the Bible." Sir John Herschel wrote: "All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the sacred Scriptures." General Grant urged our people to "hold fast to the

Bible as the sheet anchor of our liberties," adding: "Write its precepts on your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

To the Christian the explanation of this unique character of the Bible is not in the fact that it is the most splendid achievement in literature, not that it is the noblest and most sublime of all books; but it is in the fact that the Bible is the revelation of God. We will agree with Froude that the book of Job "will be found at the last to tower above all the poetry of the world;" but we also agree with Coleridge when he says: "I know the Bible is inspired because it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book." Men say God has revealed Himself by His power and plan in nature, and by His providence in history. He has revealed Himself in His Spirit in the life of the Church and of individual believers. He has inspired the books of devotion which quicken the spirit of consecration, and has illumined the thoughts of sage and seer which shine with abiding beauty and helpfulness. And all this is true; but no man has ever indicated the first truth which God has spoken in nature, in history, in literature or in experience, which He has not spoken in the Bible. Robertson Nicol says truly: "You will find the most beautiful thought ever suggested by the profoundest Chris-

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tian mind quietly folded in some word of Jesus, in some argument of an apostle."

It is the contention of Dr. Robertson Smith that "the Bible contains within itself a perfect picture of God's gracious relations to man, and that we have no need to go outside of the Bible history to know anything of God and His saving will toward us, that the whole growth of the true religion up to its perfect fulness is set before us in the record of God's dealings with Israel culminating in the manifestation of Jesus Christ. History has not taught us that there is anything in true religion to add to the New Testament. We still stand in the nineteenth century where Christ stood in the first, or rather Christ stands as high above us as He did above the disciples, the perfect Master, the supreme Head of the fellowship of all true religion." With light streaming in on all sides upon the human soul, the fact that Dr. Smith's statement stands unchallenged among evangelical Christians at the beginning of the twentieth century is of profound significance. We may not anticipate at this point the discussion of the development of the truth in the progressive unfolding of God's revelation to men. Through the years it came slowly, inspiring and explaining the evolution of man's purer conceptions of spiritual life, until in Christ the revelation reaches that fulness which Dr. Smith attributes to it. As an earnest, honest

student, he writes his judgment with increasing confidence.

Occasionally some one asserts a decline in the influence of the Bible. On the contrary the last decade of the nineteenth century has witnessed a marvellous advance in the study of this book. In the twelve months terminating March 31st, 1900, the total output of the British and Foreign Bible Society reached the amazing total of five millions and forty-seven thousand copies of Holy Writ, more than half a million in excess of the previous twelve months. But this society is only one of many. Never was the demand for the Bible as great as to-day. At the beginning of this century there are over four hundred versions of the Scriptures or some portion thereof, the number rising in the nineteenth century from a total of fifty-six. Every college of importance now gives the Bible a recognized place in its curriculum. It is in the full blaze of the world's light, and sheds the brightest light known to men from its own sacred page.

Wherever this Bible dominates the religious life of men and nations the best blessings have multiplied. It opens a fountain of healing for every human ill, strength for the weary spirit, divine sympathy for the sorrowing, precious comfort for the bereaved, and a glorious hope of the life everlasting. It brings the salvation of God to sinful men through the atoning love of Jesus

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Christ. It came into the world and touched all its life with transforming power. It has replaced the art still reflected on the walls of Pompeii with the noblest conceptions of the master's genius. It found infanticide infamously universal, and has set the child in the very centre of the world's life. It found slavery rendered intolerable by the cruelty and impurity of the master, and not only lifted up the slave to freedom, but exalted the place of labour as honourable in all men. Where the very meaning of marriage was destroyed, it consecrated this holy institution as most honourable and blessed. Where the Bible has its place, righteousness is exalted as the mark of true character and the only measure of real success in human life, while the unselfish service of a Christ-like love is the sign of God's fellowship with men.

Such is the priceless character of the Bible. Nay, no adequate expression can be found to depict its value to our race. There are those who love it with every fibre of every heart string, and who are ready to devote their lives to the end that it may be known and read to the uttermost part of the earth, as the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. It has been subjected to the fiery test of the crucible, but, like the burning bush that Moses saw, it cannot be consumed because Jehovah is in the midst of it. The divine life is its living spirit. "The words

that I speak unto you," said Christ, "they are spirit and they are life." The light of a blessed immortality shines from its pages upon the way everlasting. The knowledge of it shall one day fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

III

LITERARY CRITICISM OF THE BIBLE

THE Bible is literature. There is a certain examination of literature which is called Criticism. It is not only right but necessary that the principles of Criticism be applied to the writings contained in the Bible. C. M. Mead in *Christ and Criticism*, says: "Genuine Criticism is nothing but the search after truth; and of this there cannot be too much." There is a wide-spread prejudice against what is known as "The Higher Criticism," but this prejudice must not be directed against the principles of Criticism, for they are necessary to all intelligent study of literature. If there have been critics who have abused the methods of sound Criticism and have been arrogant in assumptions which have not been justified by the facts, we must learn to discriminate between the legitimate and necessary Criticism, with its valid and valuable results, and that extreme unwarranted claim of some destructive critics which many earnest critics repudiate.

Prevalent usage of terms has made a distinction between Lower Criticism and Higher Criticism. But as a matter of fact practically all

critics deal with the whole problem of Criticism, and the distinctions are not vital for the average man as he considers the work of the critics. Prof. H. C. King, in his *Reconstruction in Theology*, gives a good popular definition in these words: "Higher Criticism may be defined as a careful historical and literary study of a book to determine its unity, age, authorship, literary form and reliability." In doing this, account is taken of the historical references contained in the writing, its style, any citations made in it, quotations from it found elsewhere, the literary surroundings, and linguistic characteristics. For instance, the student who knows the writings of Chaucer and Tennyson is able to say of any production of English whether it belongs in the earlier period or the later. The considerations just mentioned will enable him to do this. The same principles may be applied to different writings in the Bible showing a different age for composition. Varieties of evidence point out important facts concerning the "origin, form and value" of the different writings. Therefore, in its purity, Criticism is an honest study about the facts which may be discovered which throw light upon these problems in the Scriptures.

All such facts should be sought, without hesitation and without fear. They involve questions which cannot be evaded and should not be. Principal Fairbairn, in his book *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, says truly: "A more in-

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timate knowledge of Oriental man and nature, due to personal acquaintance with them, has qualified scholars the better to read and understand the Semitic mind. A more accurate knowledge of ancient versions, combined with a more scientific archæology, and a clearer insight into the intellectual tendencies and religious methods of the old world, especially in their relation to literary activity and composition, has enabled the student to apply new and more certain canons to all that concerns the formation of books and texts. The growth of skilled interpretation, exercised and illustrated in many fields, has accustomed men to the study of literature and history together, showing how the literature lived through the people, and the people were affected by the literature; and so has trained men to read with larger eyes the books and peoples of the past." Before the days of printing, copyists would often make additions, comments, insertions in the original text. This would be proved by the discovery of an earlier manuscript. Sometimes this would be done ignorantly, sometimes deliberately. Criticism has detected many such facts, as well as apocryphal writings and pseudo-compositions. In many oriental and classical writings Criticism has accomplished very important results in this sifting process.

Yet when all has been granted gladly to Criticism which is its due, it must be insisted that much of its work has been marked by certain

features of unreliability which should lead the critics themselves to be very modest in announcing results. Prof. Briggs, in his book *The Bible, The Church and The Reason* makes this unwarranted claim for Criticism: "You may be willing to take the Bible on the authority of your pastor or your parents, or your friends, or the Christian Church. But there are multitudes who cannot do this. They want to know by what authority the Church claims that the Bible is the Word of God. The Church has committed so many sins against truth and fact that it is necessary for us to know whether the Church is in error about the Bible, or whether it is right. How can we know this except by Criticism?"

A fair answer to this contention is given by Prof. A. C. Zenos, in his book *The Elements of The Higher Criticism*, in which he says: "That the reasoning in this paragraph is not conclusive or valid, may be demonstrated by reversing its point and noticing how applicable it is when thus reversed. For example, let us say 'You may be willing to receive the Bible on the authority of experts, specialists, scholars, higher critics, but there are multitudes who cannot do this; they want to know by what authority higher critics claim that the Bible is the Word of God. Higher Criticism has committed so many sins against truth and fact that it is necessary for us to know whether the Higher Criticism is in error about the Bible, or whether it is right. How can we

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know this except by inquiring of the Church, the guardian of the Bible, its history and nature?' The fact is, neither this position, nor the position of Prof. Briggs, which is not a whit stronger than this, is tenable. The Bible commends itself, apart from Criticism or the authority of the Church, as a source of religious information and inspiration. Criticism and the Church may increase or diminish the light in which the Bible is used, but they are not absolutely necessary, either singly or combined, to authenticate the Bible." This is the fact of vital importance. While the Bible is literature, it is more than literature. Its unique place and authority, as noted in the preceding chapter, do not rest in its literary character alone. Criticism therefore is not of such supreme importance to the Bible as many critics would have us think.

Furthermore it remains to note that many of the claims of the critics are not marked by that conclusiveness of evidence which one would expect in view of their confident assertions. The precarious character of this study becomes evident in the light of two recent discussions concerning other literature than the Scriptures. One of these is concerning the writings of Homer. The German scholar Frederick Augustus Wolf set forth the theory that Homer was not the epic poet of a literary age, like Virgil among the Romans, that he was really a minstrel who probably composed only parts of the noble poems—

the Iliad and Odyssey—from the popular ballads and tales of his time. Wolf held that the writings attributed to Homer are simply compilations of these numerous songs gathered into their present form.

This Wolfian theory has had violent opponents and enthusiastic supporters. The average man must look to the specialists for their judgment. Mr. Gladstone was acknowledged to be one of the greatest Homeric students of his time. While recognizing the value of Wolf's emphasis upon the character of the material in its elemental forms, he urges that the internal evidence of the poems points to one author. He insists that the unity of tone and plan, and the unequalled splendour of poetic genius which pervades the whole, refute the theory that the works attributed to Homer are merely the skillful patchwork of later compilers. John Stuart Blackie, in his *Homer and The Iliad*, says: "We who stand on the received text have the tradition of long centuries in our favour, and not one substantial reason against us. Possession in literary as in civil affairs, is nine points of the law; and he who wishes to shake an old received document out of its consistency, must be prepared to bring something more weighty to bear against it than clever guesses and well-devised possibilities." Thus it becomes apparent that the average man must remain uncertain as to the Wolfian theory about Homer, and meanwhile he

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will continue to attribute to that great poet the writings which bear his name.

Even more significant is the discussion about certain writings attributed to Thackeray, not published as his during his lifetime. In the month of May, 1899, the literary journal *The Critic* announced a series of eight papers of "hitherto uncollected" writings of various kinds from Thackeray's pen, affirming that "this treasure trove has been collected and edited by the well-known Thackeray expert, Frederick S. Dickson. It is the result of years of research, and could only have been made by one possessing special knowledge." In his first installment of these papers Mr. Dickson acknowledges his obligations to Mr. M. H. Spielman, whom he declares to be the "High Court of Appeals on these questions." But in July *The Critic* published a letter from this same Mr. Spielman, who wrote: "I think it my duty to point out to you the absolutely untrustworthy character of the papers" of Mr. Dickson. "In spite of your announcement that he is one of three or four persons familiar with Thackeray's unidentified contributions to *Punch*, I beg leave to declare that Mr. Dickson is making only very infelicitous guesses at them."

Mr. Spielman then proceeds to establish his claim by showing that he had access to the pay-rolls of *Punch* and had verified the real writers of the articles. He insisted that "out of ten pages" of Mr. Dickson's papers "more than four, con-

taining seven gross blunders, are totally apocryphal in character." *The Critic* discontinued the publication of Mr. Dickson's articles, and in an editorial entitled "When Doctors Disagree," said in part: "An investigator writing at a distance from such first sources of information as the records in the office of *Punch* was not, of course, in a position to speak with any final authority concerning these unidentified contributions." But suppose we were to apply that statement to the theories of the critics about the Bible! They are many centuries away from their first sources.

In the light of these two recent discussions no thoughtful man can feel very confident about accepting critical theories which are not thoroughly established. When we turn to such ancient writings as the Scriptures, it becomes apparent that if the critics do not agree, they cannot expect others to be zealous to follow. Not only so, but we are familiar in our own literature with the fact that one man has produced such a variety of material as to upset many principles of Criticism when applied to those writings. For instance, no critic who might be given a complete set of the works of James Russell Lowell, all unknown to him, could consistently declare *The Bigelow Papers* and *The Vision of Sir Launfal* were written by the same man. But we know they were. Or if we took a historic drama of Shakespeare, where we know Beaumont

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entered into composite authorship with the great dramatist, what critic would confidently attempt the task of declaring the separate writings of each? Mr. Gladstone's literary style at eighty was quite different from that which marked his writings at thirty. Criticism would hesitate to admit that, according to its principles, one man had written both products from his pen. It is not intended to under-rate the value of literary criticism. We have emphasized its rightful and necessary place in all study of literature. But it is a precarious science at best, and ought to be prosecuted with great caution by men who will be conservative in announcing their judgments to the world.

IV

A LESSON IN CONFIDENCE

EVERY transition time, during which the Church passes from an older view of the Bible to a new and different one, has been marked by dangers against which we need to guard. There is great danger that the advocate of the new will be led into extravagant reaction against the old. This tendency betrays the failure of its victims to realize that the main business of the new is not to destroy, but to fulfil. Then the traditionalist is in danger of not being open-minded toward any truth which may come to light. The ultra conservative is as harmful as the ultra radical. Both hinder the progress of truth. Therefore there is great need of patience while earnest students are pushing their inquiries along the lines of research which will help to the final solution of the problem. The thinking world has just gone through such an experience, which is still so near us as to be fresh in the minds of many. During the nineteenth century a conflict was waged in the realm of physical science because of its supposed contradictions of Bible teachings which touched upon its sphere.

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There were three classes of people engaged in the discussion. First, some unchristian scientists; second, some unscientific Christians; and third, some scientific Christians. The solution of the problem was impossible by either the first or second of these classes. Each hindered the work as much as the other. They were dominated by prejudices and fears. On the one hand the new teachings in geology and biology were condemned as the work of the devil, their propagation was considered dangerous to the faith, and the minister who betrayed any sympathy with them was branded as a heretic. If the world was not made in days of twenty-four hours each, and if man had come to his physical estate by an evolutionary process, then the Bible must be given up and inspiration is an illusion. Thus many insisted not very long ago. On the other hand extremists in the study of physical science were carried away by their new and partial discoveries. Some declared that God had no longer a place in His world, that natural evolution explained everything, that the Bible was largely legend and tradition, and that the new era of light had dawned upon a belated world. An agnostic philosophy was developed upon the basis of this naturalistic physical science, and with amusing assumptions of its sufficiency made its claims upon the allegiance of thinking men.

But facts are stubborn things and they cut both ways like a two-edged sword. The third

class, made up of scientific Christians, were busy studying facts. They neither allowed prejudice to develop fear regarding the safety of the old, nor undue enthusiasm regarding the importance of the new. They realized that some great facts were settled and would remain. Facts in Christian experience, which had become universal to the Christian consciousness, they knew no discoveries in physical science could destroy. They were assured that new truth would accord with old truth. They saw that the great teaching of the Bible was not regarding the length of time consumed in creating the world, nor regarding the particular method adopted by the Creator in the creation of man; but was the teaching that God is the Creator of all things, whatever the method employed. Any new light upon the method would not affect the fact of God's presence and power in creation, as already familiar to the Christian thought. This reassuring position was resisted by many who considered it dangerous, but the study of the facts continued, with the result that the extremists on both sides are no longer heeded. Science has taught us certain new interpretations of Scripture, and Scripture holds its vital essentials against the unwarranted assumptions of science in such instances "falsely so called."

This episode is like unto others which have occurred in the past. It is now being repeated in the realm of Bible Criticism. The three classes

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are here also. The extreme critics are rationalistic and destructive. They imagine they have forever destroyed the divine revelation of God and His thought for men. The extreme traditionalist is narrowly conservative and fears that if the doctrine of inspiration should be modified, there would be nothing left of authority and truth. Neither of these will bring us the solution of the problem. A third class of Christian critics stands between these extremes. Some of them are more conservative, others more liberal; but all of them confidently assert allegiance to the great teachings of Scripture which are vital to Evangelical Christianity, and insist that whatever modification of views may result from Criticism, nothing essential to true Christianity can fail of permanency. The extreme critic will be disappointed to discover that he has gone too far. The extreme traditionalist will be surprised to discover that truth is something larger and stronger than he had supposed, and the Church of Christ will move forward welcoming all the light the years may bring.

Surely this lesson should not fail of earnest application on the part of all Christians. Men were as much alarmed about the doctrine of creation as they now are about the doctrine of inspiration. The question of authority was back of that as it is back of this. It is not to the point to say we are now facing a more serious problem. The principle is the same in both cases. If more

vital truth be involved in the present discussion, the more certainly will the outcome be the clearer shining of such truth. We are far stronger to-day in our new interpretation of the Bible-teaching about creation than our fathers were, because while the essential recognition of God as Creator is unchanged, the appreciation of His method has made luminous the fact of divine immanence in the world as it was never understood or taught before. Just as surely, if a new view of inspiration should result from the evidence which may some day win recognition, as it will if it be valid, the outcome will be a more vital appreciation of God's method of revealing truth to men, and a stronger faith in the eternal verities which bind the immortal soul to the living Lord.

V

HONOUR TO HONOURABLE CRITICS

THE average man desires to be fair. This is not always easy. One may readily concede candour and honesty of purpose to a critic who is a rationalist and makes no claim to be a Christian. He looks upon the Scriptures much as the Christian looks upon the *Koran* or the *Vedas*. But it is more difficult to be fair to the critic who is an Evangelical Christian and yet goes far in the direction of the views of the extreme critics who are avowed Unitarians or Agnostics. It is difficult to divide between a man's general attitude toward the Word of God and his critical theories. But a very important duty rests upon the Christian Church at this time just at this point in the critical movement. It is necessary for us to be thoroughly fair to all classes of Christian critics. We may believe that certain Christian scholars betray in their writings a drift toward naturalism which makes their teachings dangerously akin to the destructive rationalism of men like Kuenen; but so long as there can be no doubt of the attitude of these men toward the great fundamental truths of Christianity, we must recognize their sincerity of

motive and honesty of purpose, and above all be assured that their allegiance to these fundamentals will hold them to such an attitude of mind and heart toward the critical problems as will lead them toward the truth, rather than away from it.

In this class of men must be placed such names as those of Dr. Robertson Smith, Dr. George Adam Smith and Dr. Driver, of Great Britain, and Professors Briggs, Francis Brown, McGiffert, and Dr. Henry Preserved Smith, of America. A recent utterance of Professor G. A. Smith, at the Edinburgh Sabbath Morning Fellowship Union, is indicative of the faith of this group of critics. In that address Dr. Smith said: "Biblical Criticism has been indulged in within the last generation with a vigour and a freedom that were never known before. And we have to ask ourselves, What is the loss of it, or what is the gain? One might answer this question by examining the history we have, and especially of Europe, and noting how it has been the Bible, and the Bible alone, which has cleansed the social life, inspired new nations to independence, which has built the home, which has perfected the beginnings of education, which has brought health to art and literature, which has enlightened the ignorant, ennobled the humble, and given the lonely man power to stand alone for truth and justice, and which, above all, has inspired a power to every century, given it an energy and a

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hope to struggle for truth which nothing else could possibly have endowed it with.

“That has been the work of the Bible. It is not an instrument that has not been tried. It has been tried during nineteen centuries of progress, and never once has it lost its edge during that time. The criticism of to-day is not directed to the historical trustworthiness of the Bible, so much as to its moral validity, and this subject gives rise to difficulties and to doubts. We have to say the solution of this moral problem is to be found within the pages of the Bible itself. God has granted in His Sermon on the Mount that God’s revelation must be a progressive revelation. Do not let us do the Bible the childish injustice of judging it by things which the spirit of the Bible shows its great victory to be in outgrowing and defeating them. Do not let us condemn the Bible for practices which we find its greatest prophets themselves condemning. Let us rather measure it by the divine unity of ethical purpose which runs through it from the first to last, which never fails through age after age, and which proves itself to be the work of God, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is difficulty about the question as to how far the miracle proved the Word divine. I would have you see that while our Lord wrought the miracle, he rebuked those who followed him for the miracle

only. It is the Word, and its power to give life to the soul, that is the miracle.

“What is it that gives this Word its power? It is not the moral idea that it lays bare to us. It is not in the showing of the two worlds which expose the necessity of a moral choice between them and the warfare involved in that choice. But the divine essence of the Bible consists in this—the marvellous story, how it tells us that that moral warfare of ours is shared by God Himself, that the divine nature descended into that warfare, that it bears the agony of strife—nay, the shame and the curse of it!—all for man’s salvation. In the Old Testament, God is represented not as judicial righteousness, but as righteousness militant and suffering. For our salvation He descends from heaven, and by His love and His pity redeemed us. That love and pity were vicarious. The human heart is scarcely capable of understanding the height and the depth of the task as undertaken by our Lord, by the divine and perfect love itself.

“These are the prophecies in the Old Testament of the Incarnation that we read of in the New. That is the preparation for the appearance of the Son of God in our flesh, our weakness, tempted in all points as we are, bearing our sickness, carrying our sorrows, and finally, as St. Peter tells us, bearing in His own Body our own sins upon the tree. Be-

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cause the Bible alone of all books in the world has that story of divine love to tell, we know the Bible to be the Word of God. Not that it fits the older theories of inspiration, but that, independently of all human theories of inspiration, it carries home to the hearts and the consciences and the souls of sinful men, that otherwise would remain in sin but for this strange and almost incredible story of God's love, God's sacrifice and agony for them. It therefore carries that story home to their hearts and souls, needing no proof for itself, appealing only in its own strength. That is why the Bible shall always be the indispensable force to man's salvation, the one so unique and conspicuous, the great divine power for man's salvation in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Study your Bibles for this alone and believe in it because it gives to you this naked truth of God's love."

This quotation is justified in its length by the importance of the occasion for its use here. It is a burning utterance from the soul of a man whose spiritual discernment of truth and power of consecrated life every man knows. He is the legitimate spokesman of the company of liberal Christian critics to whom reference has been made. Every one of the men mentioned, and others of their school, will heartily endorse every word of this utterance. The fact is that one of our strongest grounds for hope is in these very men; for when such men, holding views of literary Criticism which many cannot accept, still

stand upon such fundamental grounds of Christian faith, no man need fear that the outcome of this movement will not be with full possession of every vital truth. It is Dr. Smith's expectation that a new conception of inspiration will take the place of the old. Perhaps it may be so, but all that inspiration gives us now of eternal and saving truth will still be ours. The fact is that after a man has been studying the extreme critics for a time, and turns to the writings of these Christian men, he discovers a purpose to draw back from those extreme views and show the reasonableness of a more moderate position.

The student of Dr. McGiffert's book, *The Apostolic Age*, who has studied nothing else of Criticism, is startled by much of it, and with reason. To many his method often seems vicious and his positions unjustified, but his honesty of purpose cannot be questioned by any fair-minded man. When Dr. McGiffert says in his preface: "My aim throughout has been positive and not negative, constructive and not destructive," men must give him all the honest recognition possible for his own position. And when in that same preface he places himself on record as convinced that "Second Peter is the only really pseudonymous work in the New Testament," all his various discussions of details must be considered in the light of such a general position. The writer cannot agree with the positions of these men in many particulars,

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as will appear in the discussions that follow, but he knows them, he has learned to love and trust them, and urges with profound conviction of the vital importance of the position, that the Christian Church think kindly of them and their work, without fear of any serious loss to the wholesome development of the truth in its changing forms.

But there is another side to this subject, which is of equal importance, and one which the liberal critics have not sufficiently recognized. There is a school of Christian critics who are more conservative in their attitude than that already mentioned. These men have been as faithful students as any. They are such men as Professors W. J. Beecher, W. H. Green, A. C. Zenos, Howard Osgood of America, and Professor Ramsay of England. Perhaps mention should be made of such men as Professors Bruce and Dods, of Scotland, as standing nearer this conservative element, than to the liberals. These men know the theories and the results of Criticism, but they do not see their way to go very far with the extreme critics. They recognize the true value of literary and historical Criticism as applied to the Bible, but they find too much assumption in so many of the theories to make it possible for them to give consent. They insist upon methods which shall be more scientific and less conjectural than many of the methods of the vast majority of the critics. They have not been honoured as they deserve to be by the radical men,

But when the average man comes to his inquiry concerning the whole subject, he is much impressed by the positions of these men, because, while they are open to conviction where demonstration appears, they demand demonstration of a more convincing character than much that is now offered. Through the years there have been such men withstanding the extreme views of many critics. Men like Hengstenberg, Haevernick, Keil, DeWitt and Bissell. It is not fair to them simply to smile at their small numbers, for minorities have sometimes won in the long run. It may yet be made manifest that these critics are holding the citadel. Let the Church be slow to accept too hastily the teachings of the leading critics until it has carefully studied the reasons given by these more conservative men for not yielding much that is now claimed. The writer is sympathetic with the position of these more conservative critics. They have convinced him that much of the extreme teaching of the liberals will never have an abiding place in the thought of the Church. He is all the more anxious to have the liberals fully recognized, for he has no anxiety about the outcome when all the facts are measured for their real worth. Honour to whom honour is due!

VI

VARIOUS THEORIES ABOUT THE PENTATEUCH

THE Pentateuch has been the main battle ground in the critical discussion. The great subject of the Pentateuch is the establishment of the Hebrew theocracy. Its central point is the giving of the law at Sinai. All that goes before leads up to this, and that which comes after recounts the way in which Israel was schooled in the law until Canaan was reached. Through many centuries the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was conceded by practically the unanimous voice of Hebrew and Christian scholarship. The exceptions were inconspicuous, and need not be considered, as they were not taken seriously in their own time. The critical study of the Scriptures had not begun.

In the year 1651 the English deist, Thomas Hobbes, published his *Leviathan*, in which he assailed the Mosaic authorship. About the same time, Spinoza in Holland, and Richard Sîmon in France, advocated the same view with variations. In the year 1707 Vitringa expressed the opinion that Moses collected and supplemented earlier writings in composing the book of Genesis. A few years later Dr. Reimarus elab-

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orated the same theory. The modern critical movement really took definite form in the year 1753, when Dr. Jean Astruc, a French physician, published a book entitled *Conjectures About the Original Memoirs which Moses Used in Composing the Book of Genesis*. It is to be noted that Astruc considered Moses the author of the book.

THE DOCUMENT THEORY

Astruc argued that Moses compiled the book of Genesis from pre-existing materials because of the way the two names for God—Elohim and Jehovah—are used. Many Bible students are aware that there are different Hebrew names for God used in the text, two of them much more than the others. They are El—or Elohim, translated God in the English, and Jah-veh, vocalized into Jehovah. There are sections in Genesis where now one, now another of these terms is used, and to such an extent as to suggest that the sections were written by different men, one of whom, at least, was familiar with but one of these names. Astruc conjectured that Moses had used twelve documents, two principal ones and ten others.

This theory of Astruc was adopted by Prof. Eichhorn, of Goettingen, who, however, pruned off ten of the minor documents and confined his position to the advocacy of two. Some of his contemporaries, as Illgen and Gramberg, advo-

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cated three documents. The supposed writer who employs the name Elohim exclusively was called the Elohist, while the other was known as the Jehovist. It was further claimed that the parts of the Elohist document could be taken out of the narrative and that they made a complete record taken alone. The same thing was claimed, though with more hesitation, for the Jehovist document. A further ground for the theory regarding different earlier materials is the fact that double narratives appear, as in the twofold accounts of the creation and of the flood. Moreover it was urged that an evident diversity of style marks the different documents, that each has its characteristic ideas and expressions.

As already stated, this theory was applied at first only to the book of Genesis, and did not conflict with the idea of the Mosaic authorship. It was soon discovered that this hypothesis could be applied to the remaining books of the Pentateuch. For the first time, as a consequence, the Mosaic authorship was brought into question. It was plausibly urged that if the entire Pentateuch was compiled from pre-existing materials, then the compilation must have been post-Mosaic, because the materials included the records of the time of Moses. Let it be noted, in passing, that even a theory of later compilation does not, of necessity, make impossible the intelligent belief that Moses himself collected the materials for the book of Genesis, and composed substantially the

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materials for the remaining books of the Pentateuch. A documentary theory may be held which recognizes Moses as the substantial author of the books which have been identified with his name.

THE FRAGMENT THEORY

The document theory proved quite too conservative for some of the critics. In 1815 Dr. Vater gave out the more startling theory that the Pentateuch consisted merely of a number of fragments. He was endorsed by Hartmann and others. They held that many sources were used in the compilation. All such headings as "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth," "This is the law of the trespass offering," "These are the journeys of the Children of Israel," are claimed to indicate different fragments strung together. Vater imagined a collection of laws made at the time of David and Solomon to have been the foundation of the whole; that this was the lost book found in the days of Josiah, its fragments being incorporated into the book of Deuteronomy. The rest of the Pentateuch he considered fragments of tradition, history and law collected into form between the reign of Josiah and the Babylonian exile. Even DeWette held this theory for a time, but returned to the earlier document theory.

Concerning this fragment theory, Dr. Wm. H. Green says; "Admit the legitimacy of

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this disintegrating process, and there is no limit to which it may not be carried at the pleasure of the operator. Any book in the Bible, or out of it, could be sliced and splintered in the same way and by the same method of argument. Let a similarly minute and searching examination be instituted into the contents of any modern book. Let any one page be compared with any other, and every word and form of expression and grammatical construction and rhetorical figure in one that does not occur in the other be noted as difference of diction and style. Let every thought in one that has its counterpart in the other be paraded as parallel sections evidencing diversity of origin and authorship, and every thought which has not its counterpart in the other as establishing a diversity in the ideas of the authors of the two pages respectively. Let every conclusion arrived at on one page that does not appear on the other argue different tendencies in the two writers, different aims with which, and different influences under which they severally wrote; and nothing would be easier, if this method of proof be allowed, than to demonstrate that each successive page came from a different pen."

THE SUPPLEMENT THEORY

As might have been expected, the fragment theory was altogether too violent and extreme for the majority of the critics. There followed

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a reaction toward a closer union of the parts by Bleek, Tuch, DeWette, Knobel and others, who advocated what has come to be known as the Supplement Theory. This theory returns to the Elohist and Jehovist, but instead of making them authors of independent documents, it supposes the Elohist wrote first the part which forms the ground work of the entire Pentateuch. Later the Jehovist undertook to prepare an enlarged edition of the older history, introducing sections of his own, using materials within reach, and amplifying where the need demanded. This theory had its difficulties. The great proof of the existence of a distinct Jehovist document was in the evidence of a different style and thought. But this made it necessary that the Jehovist should retain the Elohist document without changing it, else his own peculiarities would not be limited to his special contributions. But as a matter of fact Elohist passages contain the very phrases and words which are said to mark the Jehovist passages. Again supposed Jehovist passages contained the characteristics elsewhere pronounced Elohist. This is explained by saying the Jehovist imitated the style of the Elohist. But how, then, can one be certain of what is distinctive authorship and what is imitation?

THE CRYSTALLISATION THEORY

The attempt to overcome objections to the theories already mentioned resulted in still an-

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other. Ewald, in 1843, opposed the fragment theory and proposed an hypothesis of crystallization. He increased the number of writers who supplemented the earlier material from one to several. He imagined the most ancient parts of the Pentateuch to consist of four fragments, around which the later additions grew. Then followed what he calls the Book of the Origins, after which came the third, fourth and fifth prophetic narrators, each adding his part, the last of whom reformed the whole into its present unity. This work included Joshua. Last of all the Deuteronomist wrote the book bearing his name.

THE MODIFIED DOCUMENT THEORY

Still a different theory was proposed by Dr. Hupfeld in 1853. He sought to modify the document theory by urging two points: First, that the Jehovist material was a separate document; and second, that the Elohist material consisted of two documents. Long before, a second Elohist had occasionally been suggested, and Hupfeld attributed to him those troublesome passages which appeared to combine characteristics of both the other writers. These three separate documents were put together by a fourth writer, who as redactor modified, combined and transposed material at his own pleasure. Any queer phenomena were quietly ascribed to the redactor, who is altogether the most convenient discovery or

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invention yet proposed to solve critical problems.

THE DEVELOPMENT THEORY

The historical analysis of Hupfeld was taken up by Graf who combined with it his own theory of reconstruction. He urged that Deuteronomy must be considered prior to the ritual law, or priest code, which was the work of Ezekiel, with additions by Ezra. Kuenen at first accepted Hupfeld's analysis, but later adopted the development theory of Graf. He taught that the religion of Israel was a gradual development from polytheism into monotheism, and a later spiritual system. Another champion of this theory is Julius Wellhausen, who is followed by many modern critics. It will not help the understanding of these theories to repeat here the various symbols by which these supposed writers and redactors have been designated by different scholars. They would only be confusing and are therefore omitted. Suffice it to say that each has a letter to designate him, as J for Jehovist, etc.

It will be helpful, however, to specify the three codes to which the critics frequently refer, in dividing the legislation of the Pentateuch. First is the *Code of the Covenant*, which is brief, and is generally allowed to be Mosaic, namely Ex. xx-xxiii. Second is the *Deuteronomic Code*, consisting of the laws which are found in

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that book, not allowed to Moses, but probably to an age some seven or eight centuries later. Third, the *Levitical* or *Priest Code*, contained in the later chapters of Exodus, all of Leviticus and parts of Numbers. This code it is held began later than Moses, and was a gradual growth, not attaining its present proportions until the time of Ezra. Somewhere within the lines of the various theories thus briefly described the critical discussions concerning the Pentateuch will be found. Any one desiring to see a concrete presentation of the general ideas involved in these theories should examine Prof. E. C. Bissell's little book entitled *Genesis Printed in Colours*. By selecting a different colour to represent each assumed document, gloss or redaction, Dr. Bissell gives the analysis as adopted by Kautzch and Socin. To the average man this "crazy quilt" of colours is bewildering to say the least.

As the average man pauses to consider that this story of the various theories of the Pentateuch is an account of the actual product of the leading critical scholars of their day, he is astonished to realize that it could be possible for such changing opinions to be formed about the same material. He feels somewhat as Archdeacon Farrar expresses himself in his *Hulsean Lectures* regarding the critics: "The schemes which have been proposed by rival critics with so much arrogant confidence and mutual contempt have succeeded to each other in such bewildering multi-

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tudes, like waves rushing over waves, that we know not whether most to be astonished at their rapidity or to despise their evanescence!" Dean Church, in answering the question—What does Criticism say?—makes the assertion: "Here it seems to me that while the questions have been innumerable, and the answers also, the crop of clear, certain, and convincing answers has been a singularly small one. Nothing seems to me more remarkable than the contrast in our time between the certainties of physical science, and the contradictory and uncertain results, the barrenness, as a whole, of Criticism applied to the questions which most interest men."

It must be said there is general agreement among the critics regarding the composite character of most of the Old Testament material. They hold to four lines of proof for their positions. (1) The many unnecessary repetitions. But this feature is common to other literary productions of the time. (2) Frequent discrepancies and inconsistencies. Many, if not most of these alleged discrepancies, disappear before a reasonable consideration, as we shall attempt to show in specific cases. It is not claimed there are no discrepancies, but that they are relatively few, as compared with the claims of the critics. (3) Want of continuity and order in the narrative. But we cannot determine now how men should have written then. They may have had different ideas about literary methods from those

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of the schools of to-day. The shifting conditions of the journey justify the form of more or less disjointed sections in records which may have been afterwards put together. (4) Differences of style and conception. It is true especially in Genesis that we find these differences. But that only suggests that Moses had various material from which to set forth the history of the time previous to his own life. There is no such striking variety of style in the other four books of the Pentateuch or in Joshua.

The earnest position of the critics is that we must take all these lines of evidence together, not selecting one at a time as insufficient. But when they are all taken together or singly, it does not appear to many conservative critics, nor to the average man, that the claim is proven that "these facts taken together form an irresistible argument for the belief that the Hexateuch was compiled from a variety of sources." Some additions and insertions doubtless occurred. Genesis indicates composite materials. But when we study the other books of the group, as we shall do in succeeding chapters, it will appear that there are reasons for declining to grant to the critics any such degree of compilation as is claimed by them. It is important to realize that if any one of the theories given above be right, the others must be wrong in many features. The author of any one is as great a critic as the rest. Which is to be fol-

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lowed? Their general agreement is only justified by a far larger agreement in details than we can find. There must be more light before these theorists may fairly claim the confidence of average men.

VII

WHAT IS SCIENTIFIC SCHOLARSHIP?

THE foregoing considerations make this inquiry pertinent. The general claim of the critic is that he is bringing for the first time a scientific study of the Bible. This is true of the methods, when they have not been abused. We are also told that nearly all the world's greatest scholars are advocates and supporters of the Higher Criticism. But what makes a great scholar? Not inventive ingenuity in theorizing, nor keen analytic power in itself. There have been times when the world's greatest scholars have been followers of a particular school of philosophy which has dominated the thinking world for a generation. But the fact that a very few were against it, or that many were for it, did not save the whilom dominant philosophy. It lacked something essential to permanency. It is not enough to parade names. Somehow the average man has felt that this movement had much in it which would not permanently remain as an abiding deposit of truth about the Bible. There has been a feeling that much of the critical theory was not truly scientific.

Exact science makes a twofold demand. It

demands that tradition shall give way to any fact which denies tradition, no matter what may be the preconceived view. Every honest student desires this. But science also demands that no mere theories shall be accepted so long as they lack actual demonstration. If it be a good working hypothesis, let it be tested tentatively, but modestly. True science suffers in both these directions. But one reason men are inclined to cling to old views with unreasoning prejudice is the fact that so many new theories have been promulgated with unscientific haste, and soon abandoned for others. A study of the preceding chapter will illustrate this fact. The average man cannot quite understand why such great confidence is justified regarding theories which are confessedly only theories, especially when so many of the critics deal with the views of their fellows with such vigorous condemnation. One critic will assign a given passage to the Elohist while another positively assigns it to the Jehovist. Kuenen actually claims there have been no less than fifteen redactors editing and reediting the work! Then comes Wellhausen insisting on nineteen redactors!

Yet we are told these men reach their conclusions by scientific processes! The critics admit the palpable unity of the Pentateuch as we now have it, but explain it by the statement that some later writer worked up the various parts into this unity. Yet when we ask as to the time

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when this was done, Stahelin fixes it at the time of Saul, DeWette, Knobel and Bleek at the time of Josiah, Kuenen at the end of the seventh century B. C., Ewald before the destruction of Jerusalem, Hartmann, Bohlen and Wellhausen after the exile. And each of these great scholars tells us he reaches his conclusions by strictly scientific processes! In the face of such lack of harmony, which almost seems a hopeless disagreement, the average man cannot but realize that too much uncertainty marks this work of the specialists to justify him in following them with confidence very far.

To indulge the "critical imagination" is not scientific scholarship, and yet so notable a critic as Dr. Cheyne, of Oxford, admits that this is done. In his *Jewish Religious Life After the Exile* he says: "Let no one indulge in a cheap sarcasm on imaginative criticism. These intuitions are not purely accidental. They spring from sympathy with an author, and a sense of what he can and what he cannot have said." The difficulty just here, however, is that when a man decides, as a result of his critical imagination what a man can have said, or cannot have said twenty-six or twenty-seven centuries ago, another man applies his critical imagination to the same material and arrives at an opposite conclusion. That is to say they have both been indulging in some ingenious guessing. If uncertainties arise about the ancient narratives, surely there

are also grave uncertainties marking the modern conjectures of the critics regarding them!

Prof. L. J. Evans, the writer's honoured teacher, realized the danger at this point, and sought to guard against it thus: "I do not claim that all movement has been progress, or that every find has been a gain. I am well aware that in Biblical science, as in every science, there are rash speculations, unproved hypotheses, wild and dangerous vagaries. Some corners of the field are full of will-o-the-wisps, illusive, unsubstantial, unsafe, gleaming, I fear, with a light that is not from heaven. I have nothing to say in behalf of a bald, agnostic, materialistic naturalism, or of an arbitrary, capricious rationalism, which, with *a priori* dogmatism, denies the supernatural, belittles or expunges sin and salvation, eliminates out of history God's revelation of himself, evaporates out of the Bible its pneumatic inspiration, chops up its contents into lifeless fragments, and sweeps away book after book into the abyss of legend and myth. But on the other hand, there are conclusions in this field which all whose judgment is worth anything are agreed in regarding as substantially established. We must reckon with these facts. We must assign them their true value."

Would that this reverent Christian scholar had been spared to point the way of light more fully, bringing out worthy conclusions of

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critical study, and warning against the destructive work which he so brilliantly described! In the spirit of Dr. Evans, Prof. King asserts that "most important of all, a clear line must be drawn between the results of a truly scientific inductive literary and historical inquiry, and results reached because of an *a priori* antisupeaturalistic point of view. The latter cannot be called critical results." No one can question that the inductive method must win. The difficulty has been that many critics, assuming to use the inductive method, have not held to it. Equally necessary is it that those who do not follow the critics should show why they cannot do so, not by wholesale condemnation, but setting forth their reasons by this same inductive method, resting in the facts presented for their justification.

Our inquiry may well be applied to another phase of the problem. The Scripture record sometimes differs from other contemporaneous history. From a scientific point of view which is to be trusted? Some have assumed that when Scripture does not agree with other history, Scripture is wrong. But why? Perhaps the other records are erroneous. Note the opinion of competent scholars upon this important subject. Prof. Francis Brown says: "The one great distinctive feature of the literary monuments of the Hebrews is that they were informed by a spirit to which the inscriptions of Nineveh and Babylon are utter strangers. There is a truth of spiritual

conception, a loftiness of spiritual tone, a conviction of unseen realities, a confident reliance upon an invisible but all-controlling power, a humble worship in the presence of the supreme majesty, a peace in union and communion with the one and only God, and the vigorous germs of an ethics reflecting his will, which make an infinite gap between the Hebrew and his brother Semite beyond the river, that all likeness of literary form does not begin to span."

Dr. Wm. R. Harper, in speaking of the Assyrian and Babylonian writings as compared with the Hebrew Scriptures, says: "We compare these various accounts, psalms and historical narratives, and find in one a something which seizes hold of us, moves us powerfully, elevates us, inspires us. We look for this same element in the other, but it is wholly lacking. Instead, there is a dulness, a flatness, an insipidity, which disappoints, and at times almost disgusts. Why this difference? There is but one possible answer. This writing, or series of writings, is human, *only human*. The other is human, to be sure, but *also divine*. The evidence is direct; it is absolutely conclusive and must be convincing."

In harmony with this important testimony Dr. Wm. Hayes Ward says: "The Assyrian records are not infallible. Not to speak of occasional intentional falsehoods, as when one king assumes a credit that belongs to a predecessor, or the

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misinterpretation of facts to enhance his power, such as the description as a victory of what was really a defeat, as shown by the fact that the boasted victory was not followed up; it is true that the Assyrian scribes were likely to fall into easy grooves in their descriptions. Thus when a dozen kings of the Mediterranean coast are declared to have given tribute in a certain year to a certain king, and ten years afterwards he makes another raid in the same direction, and receives tribute from the very same kings, not one of whom has died, we may be confident that the names are repeated from an old list and are no longer authentic. This is the chief source of error."

In the light of such competent testimony it immediately becomes evident, not only that the Hebrew records are to be counted more trustworthy than other contemporaneous records, but also that these records of Scripture have a face value which has often been denied to them. Many of the critics ignore quite freely the *prima facie* evidence of authorship in most of the books which distinctly affirm much that leads to a legitimate inference concerning the persons who had much to do with their composition. But if these statements be true as to the superior reliability of the writings, in view of the spirit which dominates them, then it must be conceded to be scientific to demand a greater consideration for this evidence than has been given it from certain quarters.

VIII

FACTS FROM THE MONUMENTS

“ONE by one,” says Professor Sayce of Oxford, “the narratives of the Old Testament, upon which the over subtle analysis of modern Criticism had cast suspicion and doubt, are being vindicated by the progress of Oriental research.” For many years one of the most confident assumptions of the critics was that the Israelites and the surrounding people were ignorant of the art of writing books at the time of the conquest of Canaan and during the age of the Judges. They supposed the literary period of Israel to begin with Samuel. The oldest inscription yet discovered in the Phœnician alphabet is fixed at the time of the Moabite king Mesha, the contemporary of Ahab. The critics asked why no older inscriptions had been found, if the art of writing had been known centuries earlier.

Within recent years the archæologist has given the answer. A single blow of the excavator’s pick has shattered some former ingenious conclusions of the critics. In the year 1887-8 a number of cuneiform tablets were taken from the ruins of a city of ancient Egypt, the site

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of which is now known as Tel el Amarna. They consist of letters and dispatches sent to the Egyptian court by the kings of Babylonia, Assyria and Syria, and the Egyptian governors and vassal princes in the subject province of Palestine. They are not inscribed upon papyrus, or written in forms of the Phœnician alphabet, but are entrusted to more enduring tablets of clay, written in the script and language of Babylonia which proves to have been, at that time, the common language of diplomacy, but disused in Palestine at a later day.

This most important discovery proves a widespread literary activity and a considerable educational system through all those eastern countries, running back to the time of Abraham. The most interesting of the letters from Palestine are from a certain Ebed Tob, the governor of Jerusalem. He was not governor by appointment of the king of Egypt, but an ally who paid tribute. He speaks of "the city of the mountain of Salem." The word "Uru" signified city, so that Urusalem is the city of Salem, identical with Jerusalem. This Ebed Tob speaks of himself as being "a priest of the most high God." We turn to Genesis xiv, and read the account of Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, and identify this description with that of the tablets, which carry us back centuries before the time of Moses. Moreover the "written bricks" confirm the account in that same chapter

of Genesis, of the incursion of Chedorlaomer, a Babylonian prince. Let us not forget that Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."

But the most remarkable coincidences in the history of these discoveries occurred in the year 1892. Among the letters of the Tel el Amarna tablets are two that were written by governors of the city of Lachish, one of whom was Zimrida. One of the letters from the king of Jerusalem conveys the information that Zimrida was murdered at Lachish by the servants of the Egyptian king. In 1890 Dr. Flinders Petrie was excavating in Southern Palestine, at a lofty mound known as Tel el Hesi. From various indications he suspected that he had identified this very city of Lachish. In 1892 the work was continued by Mr. Bliss of Beirut. Not only did he fully identify the ancient Amorite city, but he found tablets exactly like those of Tel el Amarna, and upon them this very name of Zimrida occurs twice. Scarcely have the letters from upper Egypt been translated, when their counterparts in Southern Palestine come to the light, and the two parts of a correspondence which took place before the Exodus are joined together.

The result of this recent discovery is conclusive evidence that the land of Canaan was inhabited by people who were by no means the unlettered tribes imagined by the critics. One of their cities was named Kirjath Sepher, which

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means "the city of books," and indicates libraries in Canaan, as there were in Babylonia. In the song of Deborah and Barak we read—Judges, v: 14—that "out of Zebulon came down they that handle the pen of the ready writer." This is clearly the Hebrew, but, on the supposition that there were no ready writers, various interpretations were offered to explain the expression. But the original text is now most clearly vindicated. Moreover the tablets show that Canaan before the Exodus was the great highway between the Mediterranean Sea and the eastern centres of commerce. Canaan paid to Egypt an annual land tax which was assessed according to surveys of the Egyptian Government. The enlightened and warlike Amorites and Hittites were there, and many of the cities mentioned in the Scriptures are also mentioned on the tablets, such as Salem, Joppa, Gaza, Kishon, Ekron and others. Prof. Eрман says: "There was hardly anything which the Egypt of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties had not obtained from Syria. The culture of the Syrians must therefore have been very highly advanced to have obtained such a conquest."

Moreover let it be remembered that the conquest of Canaan by Israel was only partial even until the time of David. We know also how Israel grew into intimate relations with the people of the land, and whatever else they received of a hurtful influence, we cannot doubt that they

felt the touch of their intellectual development and literary activity. Such was the literary atmosphere that pervaded the age of Moses. It was the golden age of literature in the history of the ancient East. Thus what was for many years one of the strongest assumptions of the critics against the Mosaic authorship is completely annihilated.

The monuments have corroborated the Pentateuch in other ways. We have noted that sometimes their testimony is not trustworthy, and if it be contrary to Scripture, it cannot lend strength to the study; but when two accounts agree, the testimony of each to the other is most valuable. In the Egyptian records it is significant to note that it is the pre-Mosaic, rather than the post-Mosaic records which are confirmed and illustrated. A few years ago it was argued quite confidently that the Egyptology of the Pentateuch was so full of errors as to have made it impossible for Moses to have written it. Bohlen especially urged this view. We shall consider this point more particularly in discussing the book of Exodus; but it may be said here that a dead and buried Egypt, of which Herodotus never knew, has uncovered her sepulchres and brought new light to our problem.

We have the testimony of Rawlinson, in his *Historical Illustrations of the Old Testament*, that "in the entire Mosaic description of ancient Egypt there is not a single

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feature which is out of harmony with what we know of the Egypt of this remote period from other sources. Dr. Brugsch Bey, in May, 1890, wrote an article on "Joseph in Egypt" in the *Deutsche Rundschau*. It was suggested by the discovery in the previous year of a stone at Luxor by Wilbour, which stone mentions the seven years of want, and the attempt of one Chit-het to banish the calamity. Brugsch testifies to the historical correctness of the story as given in Genesis, identifying many names and places. He says the evidence is so conclusive that you could believe the writer of the story of Joseph "read his statements concerning the affairs of ancient Egypt from the very monuments themselves." Moreover let it be noted well that the features of the civilization pictured by the book of Genesis are not borrowed from the period of the Kings of Israel or of the Babylonian exile; but they belong to the age of the patriarchs themselves.

The monuments have corroborated the records in Genesis in other particulars. An Akkadian record of the flood has come to light, which is strikingly in accord with that in Genesis. It is especially notable that this account, like that in Genesis, has a repetition of the story. Authorities agree that this record originated about the year 2000 B. C., or five hundred years before Moses. The Babylonian record is a simple continuous narrative which follows the biblical order. The argument that Moses could not have written

Genesis in its present form has pointed to the two-fold account of the flood as one of the proofs of composite authorship. But since just such a double narrative existed five hundred years before Moses, and since we have seen how widespread Babylonian literary knowledge was, it is scarcely possible to satisfy the average man that Moses might not have used just such a record himself.

One more instance may be selected for mention. It relates to the discovery of Ur of The Chaldees. The Bible student had long been told to find Ur at Oorlah, six hundred miles away, entirely beyond the land of Chaldea. But the Bible still taught that Ur was in Chaldea. It was overlooked because modern scholars forgot that the Persian Gulf has been filled up by the River Euphrates through the centuries, and the ancient city, which was on its coast, is now far inland. The geographers looked in the wrong place, but the discoveries of Lenormant and Smith have identified Mugheir as the site of the home of Terah and Abraham. The assumptions of the scholars, based on insufficient conjectures, were wrong. The statements of Scripture, based on the facts, were accurate and correct. Thus do the facts continually as they come to light confirm the historicity and reliability of the Scriptures. The student of God's providence in history cannot but be impressed by the fact that the records of the monuments are brought to light just at a time when we are prepared by scientific

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knowledge to understand them. In an earlier age they would have been wasted. The more light they bring to bear upon the Scriptures the more luminous do the sacred records shine.

IX

THE HISTORIC MOSES

THE reader has noted in previous chapters intimations that the critical problem involves other than literary elements. Historical and theological arguments also have place. It is argued that the legislation contained in the Pentateuch is too elaborate when we consider the religious ideas which prevailed in a much later time. It is argued the legislation must have been a growth, and the same law of development which marks all other religions must have obtained in the growth of the Hebrew people. Hence nothing more than the beginnings of the Hebrew legislation could date back as far as Moses. Indeed Professor Briggs, in his *Inaugural Address*, declares "it may be regarded as the certain result of the science of the higher criticism that Moses did not write the Pentateuch."

It is intended to approach the subject in a somewhat closer study by considering each of the six books included in the Hexateuch. But before entering upon this examination, it is important to consider the significance of the effort to eliminate Moses from the Pentateuch. Not all

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the critics deny an important place to Moses in connection with what they severally consider early material, but the dominant position in the critical school leaves very little of the Moses whose work has been considered for centuries the substantial authorship of the Pentateuch. There may be many who will say it matters very little whether Moses wrote that part of the Bible which is connected with his name. But when the far-reaching character of much of the destructive criticism is understood, it becomes a matter of very earnest inquiry as to how far Moses can be ignored.

The great significance to the discussion is not found in the mere question as to who may have written the records of the legislation and establishment of Israel in the Theocracy. But it is found in the question as to whether such a theocracy was established by Moses in its essential features in that early day, or was gradually developed through centuries. This is the most vital problem in the discussion of the critical movement in Old Testament territory. We are told the writings of the Pentateuch are referred to Moses all through the Bible, just as the Psalms are referred to David. This of course is a familiar fact; but when we are assured that we have no more ground for identifying Moses with the Pentateuch than we have for identifying David with the Psalms, we must beg leave to demur.

The substantial Mosaic authorship of the Pen-

tateuch, as involving the substantial founding of the theocracy by Moses, is of far greater importance than the Davidic authorship of the Psalms, or the authorship of any other portion of the Old Testament. The Pentateuch presents a record of events involving the giving of the laws and institutions of Israel from the hand of God through Moses. The naturalistic and rationalistic theories of many of the critics cut the very heart out of the Pentateuch as an inspired record of the covenant relation established at Sinai by the living God with His chosen people. We do not urge that the Pentateuch in its present form must have come from the hand of Moses. The writer believes the material of Genesis is largely a compilation which may have been gathered together by Moses, and that the essential features of the remaining four books of the Pentateuch must be conceded to have been Mosaic rather than post-Mosaic.

In the succeeding chapters the objections to the Mosaic authorship will be noted and answered, but at this time it is desired to call attention to certain general facts which justify the conviction that Moses will remain as the recognized author of the material which constitutes the bulk of the Pentateuch. Could it be proved that Moses was not the author of this material, its value would not be lost, but it would be greatly diminished in the writer's judgment. But the progress of the critical movement has

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failed to satisfy the vast majority of Bible readers that Moses was not the historic figure he is set forth in the Bible to be. Whatever may be the outcome of other questions of authorship, all of which are secondary to this, it is confidently believed that a return to a larger recognition of Moses will ultimately mark the critical movement.

On its face the Pentateuch carries a clear presumption in favour of the Mosaic authorship. There is the direct testimony of the book to this effect in Ex. xvii:14; and xxiv:3-7; Num. xxxiii:1-2; Deut. xvii:18-19; mention of *written* blessings and curses in Deut. xxvii and xxx, and Deut. xxxi:9-13. Almost on entering the wilderness the Hebrew lawgiver received a divine order to write in the book. On reaching Sinai he is discovered again writing in the Book of the Covenant. As the wanderings in the wilderness neared their termination, he is reported as having prepared a written record of the halting places in the march. And just before he dies he is once more writing "this book of the law." *Prima facie* evidence could not be more conclusive than this. A remarkable recognition of this fact is given by no less a critic than Kuenen, who writes: "It is not only the superscriptions that assign the laws to Moses and locate them in the desert, but the form of the legislation likewise accords with this determination and place. Now this may be explained in two ways: either the laws really

come from Moses and the desert, or they are merely put into his mouth, and the desert and so forth belong to their literary form and presentment." Many critics choose the latter alternative. But some conservative critics choose the former, and their reasons for so doing will be given in the following chapters. Moreover the Pentateuch breathes that potent spirit of a living contemporaneous history which points to the writing of the substance of its material by one who was an eye-witness and participant at the time.

The historic Moses is necessary to the whole teaching of the Scripture concerning the historic Israel. According to this teaching these people suddenly took their place among the settled nations and entered upon that conspicuous and unique racial development which has continued even to this day. While there were affinities in some points with contiguous nations, their whole system is set forth as sharply separated by the grandeur of its religious monotheism, and by its complex social and civil organization, from that of all other nations. Their code of laws was so penetrating as to impress its indelible peculiarities upon the race, and to endow it with a potency and perpetuity of national life, in the face of terrific counter influences, to which history furnishes no parallel. Such an effect demands a cause; and that cause is the living system known as Mosaism. When the critics tell us the record

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is not true to the facts, and that they have discovered how impossible it was for Israel to do as the Pentateuch records, then the average man demands conclusive evidence to substantiate their claims. We shall examine these claims, attempting to measure them fairly, and show why they fail to eliminate Moses from his long-recognized place as the founder of the Hebrew theocracy.

Another general fact to be mentioned here is that the older parts of the Old Testament witness to the previous existence of the Pentateuch by striking references to passages in the same. Often there are verbal coincidences of expression so accurate as to indicate a written antecedent rather than an oral tradition. A very helpful study of this subject is found in Hengstenberg's *Authenticity of the Pentateuch*. The book of Joshua is so full of these references that it was necessary to include it with the Pentateuch in the theories of later authorship. In the book of Judges the refusal of Gideon to receive the crown of Israel indicates a knowledge of the Mosaic law upon the subject. The same evidence appears in Samuel's unwillingness to choose a king.

One main argument of the critics against the existence of the laws in the earlier age is the fact that so many violations of them occurred. But Bleek himself, in his *Introduction*, is candid enough to admit that the fact that the laws were not obeyed is not sufficient proof that they did

not exist. The same record tells us of the law and of its violation. In the earlier prophets Isaiah, Micah, Amos, Hosea, there are continual references to the Pentateuch. In fact the only natural explanation of the divine authority which the nation conceded to the prophetic message is the fact that Israel knew the law upon which the prophet stood as his sanction and vindication as God's messenger. In the New Testament the teachings of Christ and especially the whole argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews carry a tremendous assumption in favour of the actual work of the historic Moses as set forth in the sacred record.

X

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

IT is proposed to give a special examination of each of the six books of the Hexateuch not only to consider in more detail the discussion regarding the historic Moses, but also to give the reader a close view of the features which mark the work of Bible Criticism. It is of vital importance to remember that the Bible record is only concerned with the history of man, his creation and development, in so far as it is related to the story of God's plan and work in redemption. The admirable statement of the Westminster Confession is—"The light of nature and the works of creation and providence are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of His will which is necessary unto salvation." Therefore we have the revelation of that divine will and the record of God's dealings with men in connection with the bestowment of this saving truth. The purpose to accomplish this result at once explains the fact that all matters external are only touched upon as they bear some relation to this history of man's redemption, and also explains the marvellous "consent of all the parts" from Genesis to Revelation. This manifest pur-

pose is the key to the unity and design of the Pentateuch, and explains the character of its construction. So also is each book explained in its relation to the whole. In the light of this purpose it is manifest that the book of Genesis is intended to reveal the unfolding of the divine plan up to the time of Moses.

It is altogether reasonable to believe that Moses used a variety of material in the composition of the book of Genesis, material which came from various sources. But there is such evident coherency in the general plan of the book that the average man is constrained to believe this plan determined its character from the very beginning. The plan is seen in the recurrence of the formula—"These are the generations." Ten times we have this expression, holding us to a special line of descent, according to the divine selection. A glance at the following table will show the significance of this plan.

I: 1-II: 3. General account of the creation.

II: 4-IV: 26. The generations of the heavens and the earth.

V: 1-VI: 8. The generations of Adam.

VI: 9-IX: 29. The generations of Noah.

X: 1-XI: 9. The generations of the sons of Noah.

XI: 10-26. The generations of Shem.

XI: 27-XXV: 11. The generations of Terah.

XXV: 12-18. The generations of Ishmael.

XXV: 19-XXXV: 29. The generations of Isaac.

XXXVI: 1-XXXVII: 1. The generations of Esau.

XXXVII: 2-L. 26. The generations of Jacob.

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By a brief analysis of this table we discover some instructive facts. The initial chapter gives a general account of the creation. The second chapter is generally declared by the critics to be a second account of the creation, but, considered in the light of the general plan, that is not an accurate statement. Evidently the purpose of this chapter is to show that out of all the creation we have especially to do with man. Therefore only so much of the general account is repeated as is involved in a more detailed statement concerning the creation of man. There is a marked difference of style in the two accounts, but the record is consistent with the plan to narrow down the story to man. So from Adam to Noah the main purpose is to show how the institution of salvation was made necessary by the fall and corruption of the race. In the tenth chapter the writer pauses to incorporate that remarkable ethnological register, which it is reasonable to suppose was gathered from various materials.

When we come to Terah, we note with surprise the absence of the name of Abraham in our table. Had that table been prepared long after the time of Moses, it is morally certain that the name of Abraham would have been there. The laws of literary criticism point to this unexpected feature as the surer evidence of authenticity. Note further how Ishmael is dismissed with six verses, because Isaac is in the chosen line of descent. Then only one chapter is given to Esau, while full

accounts are devoted to Jacob and his family as the seed of the coming nation. Thus the plan draws the reader to the time of Moses. Why should he not have been one, and the most important one of the writers of Genesis? The fact is clear that the book, as we now have it, was written to fit into the account of the Exodus, and that it looked forward from the time that Canaan was promised to Abraham, past the thralldom of Egypt, to the time when that promise should be fulfilled.

In a former chapter we have noted that the Babylonian account of the flood is one continuous narrative, with all its repetitions, existing long before the time of Moses. We have also quoted Dr. Brugsch Bey in his testimony to the unbroken continuity of the story of Joseph. When we note these evidences of coherency and unity in the book, we are constrained to question the conclusiveness of theories about a variety of fragmentary materials. Moreover the critics assume a literary renaissance of the restoration period during which they think much of this work was put into its final form. Yet Gesenius declares Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Chronicles to be inferior literary work, as compared with the Pentateuch. Moses was learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians.

In urging a later date for Genesis, the critics point to passages which seem to presuppose the occupation of the land, as Gen.

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xxxvi:31. This statement is said to indicate the time of the monarchy. But it is quite sufficient to consider this an interpolation by a later writer, who considered the explanation valuable. Even to add to earlier tables and bring them up to date was a natural thing for some later historian to do. Probably several such additions were made from time to time. Other passages suggesting later comments are Gen. xii:8, as suggesting a Palestinian standpoint, xiv:2, "Bela, which is Zoar," xix:37, the expression "unto this day." All of these are reasonably explained when considered probable later annotations. This explanation is the more reasonable because these comments take on the appearance of being interjections, and do not partake of the general tone of the narrative which breathes an atmosphere of the earlier age.

ANTIQUITY AND CHRONOLOGY

We have noted in a former chapter the fact that modern scholarship has given us some new points of view from which to consider some of the statements in Genesis regarding the creation, both as to the time involved and the method of evolution. A related problem is that of the antiquity of man. The chronology of Archbishop Usher has been recognized as uncertain, previous to the time of Moses. The discussion as to whether Israel was actually 430 years in Egypt, or whether it was 430 years from Abraham to

Moses (Acts vii : 6, and Gal. iii : 17), leaves the time to Abraham conjectural. Previous to Abraham the record is uncertain as to chronology. Just whether the names in Gen. x, refer to individuals or tribes is a debated question. The fact is now beyond dispute that man has lived longer than 4000 years B. C. How much longer we do not know, but the simple fact justifies the statement that we are not to look for accurate chronology in the early chapters of Genesis. The evident purpose of the writer is to deal, with a few swift strokes of the pen, with the early history of the race previous to the time of Israel in Egypt, when the special subject of the chosen people is reached.

THE ELEMENT OF ALLEGORY IN GENESIS

The foregoing consideration becomes the more evident when we note the character of the account of the early history. The word "Adam" simply means "man." Literally it signifies "earth," and refers to the earthly man. Wherever the word "man" occurs in the Old Testament, it is the Hebrew "adam." The study of the early record, especially in the light of such New Testament references as those of Paul in Romans v, and 1 Cor. xv, makes it clear that the teaching is regarding the generic man, rather than a particular individual. Of course the generic man at the beginning was the Historic Adam who faced the problem of moral discipline, and in whose life all

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the life of the race was involved, as he entered into the experiences of sin. It is at the point of the account of man's sin that we must note the allegorical character of the record. The key to this account is the expression "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." This is manifestly a figure. It suggests the setting of the garden, and other features of the picture. But while the method of statement is figurative, the fact set forth is the mighty reality of the moral struggle of the generic man, as he faced the responsibility, as a conscious moral agent, of obeying or disobeying the law of God. In his sin he has made necessary the help of a Saviour for man. This is the great fact to be brought out in the part of the record which is to be introductory to the story of the work of redemption.

XI

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

IN the book of Exodus we touch the life of Moses. Naturally we would expect to find in it a certain infusion of that peculiar evidence of personal knowledge which gives a living atmosphere to contemporaneous history. To the average man this spirit of autobiography appears on every page. One of the notable commentaries on this book is that of Dr. Kalish. He viewed Exodus as "forming the centre of the divine revelation," and consequently as being "the most important volume which the human race possesses." He brings the intimate familiarity of Jewish scholarship to his task, and declares, as against opposing theories, that "we see the completest harmony in all parts of Exodus; we consider it as a perfect whole, pervaded throughout by one spirit and the same leading ideas."

The book of Exodus reveals the purpose to show how Israel multiplied in Egypt until the time of Moses, to give an account of the circumstances in which the Israelites quitted Egypt, and to describe the giving of the law, together with the way the people entered upon the institutional life which centred about the Tabernacle service.

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There are some gaps in point of time, but the plan naturally omits much not needing to be recorded. How important some items recorded may have been then we are not competent to judge now. There are sections which stand complete in themselves, but having the appearance of separate entries into the journal, made at different times. The sections preserve a continuous harmony and are not disjointed in character. The critics point to this sectional character of the record as proof against its unity; but had a later writer been putting fragments together, he would naturally have omitted some of the repetitions and covered up the sectional points. The very character of the work indicates its original form.

Objection is made to the Mosaic authorship of Exodus because Moses is spoken of in the third person, and because there are one or two expressions complimentary to Moses, which it is assumed he would not have written concerning himself. As to the first point, it is historic that Zenophon and Cæsar, in writing histories of which they were the heroes, both spoke of themselves in the third person. But we find this custom common in Egypt in that day. As to the mention of a praiseful fact, as in xi: 3, we may say the wonder is there is not more of it. The reference is really modest, and the book is marked by a spirit of humility and a sense of unworthiness in Moses. The critics again claim a "double

treatment," as it is called, for Exodus, as for all the other books of the Hexateuch. When one faithfully follows their analysis for a time, he is really astonished at the points they seize upon to prove composite authorship.

But a more important fact is that he discovers the critics disagreeing among themselves. A good illustration of this disagreement may be mentioned here. Professor Driver discusses the theories of Wellhausen and Dillman about a third writer being the probable author of certain passages in Exodus, and says: "The point is one on which it is not possible to speak with confidence." We find DeWette and Staehelin assigning the twentieth chapter to the Elohist, while Knobel insists that it belongs to the Jehovist. We read Staehelin's statement—"Wherever I find mention of a pillar of fire, or of a cloud, or of an angel of Jehovah, or of a coming down of God, I feel tolerably certain that I am reading the words of the author of the second legislation," and we begin to "feel tolerably certain" that some arbitrary and fanciful guessing is going on in Staehelin's imagination in the name of scientific scholarship. These little ear-marks crop out now and then, as one studies the critics, and they tend greatly to destroy the confidence of the average man in the real value of their conclusions.

The unity of the historic movement in the record points to one author of its main contents.

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Moreover certain facts strengthen the conviction that the author was familiar with Egyptian words and phrases. Canon Cook, in his appendix to Exodus in the *Speaker's Commentary*, shows that from thirty to forty Egyptian words occur in the first sixteen chapters. The writer not only shows familiarity with the language, but also with the climate, customs and products of Egypt, such as ordinarily implies residence there for some years. Of equal importance is the fact that the writer is thoroughly familiar with the phenomena of the Sinaitic peninsula. That part of the book which refers to the sojourn is pervaded by a local colouring, an atmosphere of the desert, which has always made itself felt by every traveller who has explored that region. This knowledge of Egypt and the peninsula points to Moses, as to no one else, as the writer. It is scarcely conceivable that some later writer should reveal these characteristics. Had a later writer lived in Egypt, it is too much to ask of us to imagine him travelling the infested peninsula that he might be able to reflect its atmosphere. There was no time between the exodus and the reign of Solomon when an Israelite would have been at all likely to possess such familiarity.

Another special feature of the critical discussion of this book is the contention regarding the Tabernacle. The extreme critics claim that this section of Exodus is unhistorical, that it is the result of the effort of some late compiler to exalt

the ideas of the people concerning the early priesthood, and to give a greater importance to the earliest life of Israel. To do this the theory is that the features of the temple life at Solomon's time were put back into the Tabernacle, so much of the setting being changed as would be necessary to make it appear natural in the desert. Concerning this theory more will be said when we come to discuss the books of Kings and Chronicles. It may be said here that this theory adds to the difficulties far more than it contributes to clear them. Possibly some of the details may have been elaborated by a later hand, but we have no reasonable evidence that the substantial story of the Tabernacle and its service will not stand as historic from the beginning.

XII

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

THE book of Leviticus forms the centre and heart of the five books of Moses. It contains the greater part of the Sinaitic legislation, from the time of the erection of the Tabernacle, commonly termed the Levitical code. There are critics who favour different documents in other parts of the Pentateuch who recognize the integrity of Leviticus, and attribute it mainly to one writer, the Elohist. But others bring their dissecting knife here as elsewhere. Only one passage suggests a late date, namely, xviii: 28. But the context here shows a natural anticipation regarding Canaan, and the second half might have been added as a comment by a later writer. In the midst of the legislation we have a historic section, comprising chapters viii-x, recounting the consecration of Aaron and his sons. Certain naturalistic critics would repudiate the genuineness of this section because it records a miracle. Others declare it to have been forged at a later day to support the authority of the priestly caste. But it is difficult to believe that one who inserted an interpolation to exalt the priesthood of a later day, would have pic-

tured the priests who figured in the narrative as receiving the punishment of death because of their sins.

As to the legislation, the critics generally maintain that these laws came into the life and customs of Israel through years of development. It is not unlikely that some laws were added to this code in after years, but when one examines the opinions of the critics about the matter, he is not convinced. For instance, Dr. Driver comments thus on the fourth chapter: "It is not impossible that this chapter may represent a more advanced stage in the growth of the sacrificial system than Ex. xxix, or Lev. viii-ix; for here the blood of the sin offering for the chief priest and for the people is treated with special solemnity, being brought within the veil, and sprinkled on the horns of the incense altar; whereas in Ex. xxix, and Lev. viii-ix, it is treated precisely as prescribed here in the case of the ordinary sin offering." Let the reader examine this text given by Dr. Driver, and note its character. Ex. xxix, contains instructions for the consecration of priests, and the reference to sin offerings is of a general character, in connection with the act of sanctifying the altar. Lev. iv, is the distinctive law of sin offerings, as applied to priests, to rulers, to a common citizen, and to the whole congregation respectively, Lev. viii-ix contain the account of the consecration of Aaron and his sons and their first offerings. To the average

man there is no word or syllable to justify the idea that chapter iv contains any later legislation than chapters viii-ix.

Of course when a book is largely a collection of laws, it is not strange that the very nature of the collection should lead to suggestions of a compilation through the years. But there are other tokens of earlier origin which must be kept in mind. Aaron and his sons move naturally through the scenes. The only place of worship mentioned is the Tabernacle. The Israelites are always described as a congregation under the authority of elders. Everything bespeaks the life of a camp, and that camp in command of Moses. The law touching sacrifices in chapter xvii, which was for the camp, is altered in Deut. xii, in view of the approaching permanent settlement in Canaan. Moreover certain laws are given as obtaining against well-known Egyptian customs. Not only so, but warnings are given against the sins of the Canaanites. The chapter on the monuments makes it plain that Moses would be familiar with the life of Canaan, as well as Egypt. Israel is taught that because of Canaan's sins the people are to be exterminated. An instance of familiarity with Egypt is the reference to marriage with sisters, a custom which stands there alone among the prevailing habits of antiquity.

Another set of laws points to a pre-Canaanite origin, namely those in chapter xxv, which refer to the Sabbatical year and the year of jubilee. It

seems this law was never observed until after the captivity. We learn from 2 Chron. xxxvi: 21 that the years of the captivity betokened the purpose of God to honour the law which Israel had broken. After the captivity the law was kept, as was that touching idolatry. But it is perfectly evident that no such law would have been promulgated at any time between the settlement of the land and the captivity. Everything in the atmosphere of the life of Israel makes against such a possibility. This law is a part of that ideal state which was so fully elaborated by Moses, but never fully obeyed by recreant Israel. No theory of naturalistic development can account for these ideal laws which were never kept. The keeping of them after the exile is marked by a knowledge of them as formerly existing, but not kept. The previous existence of the law is necessary to an adequate explanation of the later history of its final observance. Just such laws are the authority for the utterances of the prophets in condemnation of Israel's failures and sins. This fact concerning Israel's violations of Jehovah's laws is one of the strongest evidences that Moses elaborated a system of legislation, such as no after period could have produced amid the laxity and license of the times.

Canon Rawlinson points out that in the Book of Judges, "the sacred character of the Levites, their dispersion among the several tribes, the settlement of the high-priest-

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hood in the family of Aaron, the existence of the Ark of the Covenant, the power of inquiring of God, the binding character of a vow, the distinguishing mark of circumcision, the distinction between clean and unclean meats, the law of the Nazarites, the use of burnt-offerings and peace offerings, the employment of trumpets as a means of setting up a king,—all this constitutes clear evidence that the Mosaic ceremonial law was already recognized and considered in force." So in Samuel we find Eli the high-priest, of the house of Aaron, the lamp burns in the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant is in the sanctuary, and the various kinds of sacrifices are referred to. It is a chain of evidence with strong links.

The book of Leviticus is marked by a prophetic character. Its elaborate ritual is saturated with a spiritual significance. It is a shadow whereof the substance is Christ and His kingdom. The Epistle to the Hebrews presents this truth as its great theme, and teaches that Moses was the chosen servant of God through whom this system was given to Israel. The reference is as clear to the historic Moses as to the historic Abraham or the historic Christ. We read in Hebrews iii: 5-6, (R. V), "Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken; but Christ as a son over His house." The inspired writer means to say that Christ is the greater

Moses of the New Testament. Moses, with his marvellous gifts, was raised up, trained and called of God for his specific life-work. The law was given by Moses: grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The tone of Israel's life history does not suggest a gradual building of laws which came to permanent form after most of the nation's life was spent. Instead of this, the book of Leviticus breathes a constant spirit of prophetic anticipation of Israel's future development into greatness, according as these laws of God are honoured and obeyed. Moses stands out in the record as a man who was not a product of naturalistic growth, but an exceptionally equipped man through providential leadings, out of which experience he gave Israel such a beginning in its institutions as would have been impossible in ordinary conditions. Under the leadership of Joshua this high tone of the establishment of the people continued, but after his death the laws were ignored and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. The degeneration was not strange. But the high standard remained, though compromised and forgotten. Moses was ever the one great figure in all Israel's career, and this undisputed fact makes it necessary for the critics to suggest that all after writers must needs put their contributions back under the name of Moses to give them the force of real law! This must mean that the day will yet come when this ac-

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knowledgeed greatness of Moses, dominating all Israel's history, will be admitted as evidence of his actual achievements as law-giver at the beginning of the nation's life.

XIII

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

THE special problems which the critics have suggested in the Book of Numbers are numerous. Many attacks are not so much made against its authenticity as against its inspiration and credibility. Some of the critics always draw the line at divine intervention. DeWette says it is quite unnatural to suppose that Moses would have been willing to spend forty years in wanderings when he was so near to Canaan, and he takes offence at the statement that this wandering was a punishment for Israel's disobedience. There is much of this kind of destructive opinion among the non-evangelical critics.

Brief mention will be made of the special points in this book. There is a gap of thirty-seven years in the record, in which we have no mention of the doings of Israel, excepting the account of the rebellion of Korah and his coadjutors. Some critics consider this proof that Israel did not remain forty years in the wilderness, while others take it as evident that the record is incomplete. But we have noted in a former chapter the manifest design in the record to note only those

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events which touch the development of the plan of redemption. Hence the record passes over in silence the time in which the people who are not to enter Canaan are supplanted by the rising generation. They have no more place in the record. Much criticism is also aroused by the way several events are apparently crowded into the record of the fortieth year. The difficulty arises out of the assumption that each event mentioned was finished before the next took place; whereas nothing prevents the idea that several of them proceeded simultaneously, in which case the difficulty disappears.

The critics have made vigorous attacks upon the statistics in this book, the number of fighting men, the number of the congregation and the number of the first born. It should be said that we cannot be sure of the Old Testament record in the case of figures. There are serious difficulties in the way of accepting all the statements of figures. One of the easiest things to confuse would be figures in years of copying. Yet notwithstanding this fact, it is seldom necessary to question the record. In this particular case the reader is referred to Keil's *Commentary* for a careful explanation and a fair solution of all the difficulties suggested. We are told the account of the setting apart of the tribe of Levi betrays the marks of fiction. But the undeniable fact remains that the six cities of refuge, mentioned in chapter xxxv, were

actually occupied by the Levites from the beginning. It is further claimed that the statement in iv: 2-3, referring to the proper age of Levites for duty, contradicts that in viii: 24. But a moment's examination shows that the first refers to carrying the Tabernacle, and the second to performing sacred functions in the Tabernacle. The heavier task required an age of thirty years, while the lighter duties only required a certain maturity of twenty-five years.

The episode of Balaam has naturally received considerable attention. It is true it has a distinct character. It is also true that these three chapters might be dropped out and the record would seem to be complete just at that point without the account of Balaam. To the critics this is all-sufficient ground for declaring it to be a later contribution from a different source. But if the episode occurred then and there, the history is not complete without it. Moreover, while the record from chapter xxi to xxv would seem unbroken, if the intervening section were dropped, still we would be at a loss to understand the references to Balaam in chapter xxxi, unless we had this record. As to how Moses may have secured the material, we find in chapter xxxi that Balaam was slain among the Midianites and his effects captured. Therefore no special revelation was necessary for Moses to come into possession of the facts. Very naturally the style and literary finish would be different

when the writer turned from the journalistic annals to such a theme, which must have thrilled his soul with the vision of the guidance of Israel's God. Moreover the nations mentioned in Balaam's prophecy belong to the Mosaic period. The Kenites later disappear entirely. Reference to Agag was once claimed as indicating the time of Saul, but it is proved to have been the general title of the Amalekite princes as Pharaoh among Egyptians and Cæsar among Romans.

Let us now note briefly some positive indications of Mosaic authorship. The minute touches here and there point to a writer who had lived through it all, as in xi: 5. Some of the passages clearly belong to the Mosaic age. Bleek concedes chapters i, ii, iii, iv, xix, and parts of vi, x, xxi, and xxxiii. Ewald agrees largely with this, and adds parts of x and xx, frankly admitting that "at a later period they could not have been attempted." Concerning the camping stations noted in xxxiii there is almost unanimous consent in attributing the record to Moses. As to the songs in xxi, Bleek, in his *Introduction*, says: "It is so absolutely against all probability that they should be the production of a later age that DeWette has acknowledged them to be of the age of Moses. If we find here songs which do not contain any reference at all to the circumstances of a later time, but are, on the contrary, full of features of individuality which are not otherwise intelligible, and are without

meaning except in reference to circumstances in the time of Moses, it becomes highly probable that they were not only composed in the Mosaic age, but that they were then written down, and have come down to us from thence."

We also have in this book the evidence of intimate acquaintance with Egypt, as in xiii:22. The reference to the boundary of the land suggests the time of Moses. The mention of the Arnon as the boundary between Moab and the Amorites indicates a written record while the Israelitish army was still on the south bank of the river. Moreover the fact that the boundaries mentioned in xxxiv do not exactly correspond with the land actually occupied clearly points to this chapter as written before the entrance into Canaan, for no later writer, after Israel failed to occupy all the land, would ascribe to them land which they did not possess.

It is quite likely that this book, like others, has a number of interpolations by later writers. It is generally thought the Old Testament canon received its permanent form during the Persian period in the years extending from Ezra to Nehemiah. The transmission of the Mosaic writings through a thousand years of copyists in the schools of the prophets and elsewhere would very naturally involve occasional marginal comments which would creep into the body of the text. In chapter xii:3 we have an instance in point. In xv:32 the indication is that the in-

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cident mentioned was recorded after the wilderness journey. We read that Joshua added to the book of the law, (Josh. xxiv:26), and it is a reasonable inference that he recorded the account of the death of Moses at the end of Deuteronomy and added some comments at other points in the history. With all these additions taken into account in the development of the people and their institutions, the indications mentioned above still point to the substantial Mosaic authorship, the importance of which we wish to emphasize. It seems more rational to recognize occasional later touches as brief supplementary comments, than to elaborate an analysis of fragments, concerning the details of which no two experts agree.

XIV

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

THE title of this book is likely to be misleading as it is apt to suggest that we have here either a second code of laws, or a recapitulation of laws already given, whereas it is rather a summary of the most salient features of Jehovah's dealings with Israel, and the commandments whose observance was of supreme importance when the people were settled in the promised land. Many parts of the law already given are not mentioned, and few new laws are given. It is the personal and ethical, rather than the political and official aspect of the law that is dwelt upon. In fact, the book consists of a series of sermons having historical and legislative features, but especially hortatory, and revealing the subjective spirit of the author. This latter feature is in contrast to the previous books, in which the objective element prevails. The admonitions, appeals and warnings of Moses are enforced by constant references to the history and law which the people already knew.

The living Moses moves through the atmosphere of this book. The attitude of the writer, both retrospective and prospective, is that of one

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in the position of Moses at the time immediately before the entrance into Canaan. There is not a hint of Jerusalem, or the temple, or the later life in the land. Such an expression as "beyond the Jordan" may have been added later. The principal foes are the Canaanites who disappear from the record in the time of the Judges. The vivid reminiscences of Egypt suggest their recent occurrence. Such a statement as that in iv:3-4 is only intelligible as spoken to those who witnessed the incident mentioned. All this points to a substantial Mosaic authorship.

And yet the radical critics tell us it is quite impossible to believe that Moses could have written it. They hold this view because there is such a marked difference of style from that which marks the fragments which they concede to be Mosaic, and because of the same general grounds on which they stand against the Mosaic authorship of most of the Pentateuch. When the average man asks how we are to set aside the continuous claim in the record that the material is Mosaic, the answer given is the most serious yet made by the critics. They must explain Moses away somehow, and rather than abandon their theory, they go to an extreme which is astonishing. They boldly tell us the author of this book put the name of Moses upon it in order to give it standing at a later time. They do not like the word forgery, and tell us we must not think of this sort of transaction as forgery, for

when Scripture writers did this, it was not intended to deceive, but to throw light upon the historical situation.

That explanation may possibly do in some instances, but in this one it does not satisfy. We ask for the name of the man who did this thing, and are informed that it was probably the prophet Jeremiah! How can a man be complacent in face of such a statement as that? How were holy men moved by the Holy Spirit to perpetrate such false assumptions upon the people? We are told that probably Jeremiah and his cousin Hilki'ah connived in giving this forth as the law which they found in the temple at the time of Josiah, having prepared it for the occasion, and thus bringing it forward just at the appropriate moment to inaugurate the great revival in Josiah's reign! We are told this must not affect our appreciation of Jeremiah as a man of integrity and the messenger of the God of righteousness to Israel! This theory must be carefully considered.

The reasons given by the critics are quite insufficient. They say if the law had existed before this time it is inconceivable that it should have been lost as the record teaches. But the conditions readily explain the failure, as we have noted heretofore. The deplorable idolatry that prevailed during the reigns of Manasseh and Ammon, extending through half a century, is all-sufficient explanation of the fact that the Pen-

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tateuch was neglected and ignored, and by many actually unknown. Only the few were educated. The multitude were ignorant. It is urged further that the whole book could not have been read through in one day. But it is assuming to say it is so reported to have been read. Moreover it is asserted that it looks very suspicious to have the book found just at the time when it was needed to assist the plans of the reformers! Divine providence counts for nothing!

If Jeremiah could declare from Moses what was his own, why could he not declare from God what was simply his own? No, this is not fair to Jeremiah. The advocates of this theory seem to have forgotten the dark ages of Europe, previous to the Protestant Reformation, when the Bible was actually unknown to the multitudes and known only to the few, while its teachings were a dead letter and its spirit perverted. Their argument would prove that no New Testament existed until Luther found it in a library and brought it forth to the people. This fact of a lost and forgotten Bible within recent centuries throws much light on the whole claim that because Mosaic laws were not obeyed therefore they did not exist.

Of course it cannot be claimed that this theory is the result of scientific scholarship. This is a theory made to fit in with the preconceived theory, which must include Deuteronomy or fall. Let the reader turn to the book of Deuteronomy

and read it through. Then let him turn to 2 Kings xxii and 2 Chron. xxxiv. He can judge of their meaning and tone as well as any man. It is a plain story in itself, and its main point is that it contains threatenings of punishment because "*their fathers* had not kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that was written in this book." The *fathers* had had this book in their possession, for their sin was that "they had not kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that was written in the book." This was the understanding of those who announced its discovery, or they pretended it to be so. But if the fathers had not seen it, they had not sinned as is represented here! Not only so, but we note again and again how Moses is asserted to have spoken, to have blessed the people, etc. Dr. Driver says concerning the song in chapter xxxii: "The theme is developed with great literary and artistic skill," and yet the brilliant writer cannot prevent the confident critics from discovering that the song was written long after Moses' time! The book declares that it came from Moses, but this declaration counts for nothing in the mind of the radical critic.

The extent of the deception practiced can only be realized by reading the book through, keeping in mind this theory, that it was written some nine hundred years after the time of Moses, and that the historical references to incidents which are represented as occurring are the merest fic-

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tions of possible traditions! The great point in the theory is that the few men in the scheme sought to make the people believe that Moses wrote the book in order to give them greater authority, in their effort to put down idolatry and advance righteousness! They even specified the year, the month and the day on which they said Moses began to speak the message recorded! Kuenen says of these men: "They considered themselves exempt from all responsibility." But it will be a long time before the average man will believe that such a motive can be back of such a production. Dr. Alexander Stewart, of Aberdeen, says truly; "The books of Moses are so high in moral sentiment, so pure in moral principle, so strong in defence of righteousness, and so full of reverence for truth and God, that it is impossible morally to believe that men so falsifying history for a purpose could have composed at the same time such a noble moral structure as the Pentateuch." The average man cannot believe such a theory will ever commend itself, or that the facts will ever be apparent which will justify the acceptance of it by the general public.

XV

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

THE Jews were accustomed to separate the book of Joshua from the Pentateuch. The five books of Moses composed what they called the Law. Joshua was grouped with Judges, Samuel and the Kings, composing the books known as the "Former prophets." Evidently this division had its primary explanation in the fact that Moses was identified in the Jewish mind with the Pentateuch. Doubtless the close connection of Joshua with the preceding record was always recognized, but more conspicuous than this connection was the fact that the age of Moses stands out as peculiarly the age of the authoritative establishment of the people under divine institutions received at the hand of the great lawgiver.

From another point of view the book of Joshua may properly be grouped with the Pentateuchal rather than the succeeding records. As a portion of the history, it fills out the account of the settlement of the promised land. When thus added, the group of six books is called the Hexateuch. The book abounds in references to the law of Moses, and to the in-

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structions which he gave to Joshua as his divinely appointed successor in the work of completing the conquest and settlement of the land, and establishing the people in the law and worship of God. Therefore if the composite authorship of the Pentateuch is maintained, much of it claimed to be later than Joshua's time, the book bearing his name must also come into this category.

The arguments here are like unto those already mentioned in former chapters. For instance it is urged that the book of Jasher was not written earlier than the time of David, and hence the mention of this book in Joshua is proof that Joshua was not written until David's time. But there is reason to believe the book of Jasher was a collection of national ballads which received additions from time to time, as events occurred which occasioned their writing. In Joshua x:13 the Syriac version calls it the Book of Canticles, and understands it to be a book of songs commemorative of the brave deeds of Israelitish heroes. Jasher means "upright," and the name would be equivalent to the "Hero Book" of the nation. Reasonable explanations are likewise given for the various traces of a later date presented by the critics. An occasional instance may best be explained as an interpolation or an inaccuracy in transmission.

Far more serious is the charge of the critics that the Deuteronomist embodied the references to his own work in the book of

Joshua in order to facilitate the reception of his pretended laws of Moses. Ewald and Knobel attribute the work to the Deuteronomist, taking for granted, in their characteristic assurance, everything necessary to their theory. Yet when it comes to details, Knobel pronounces Ewald's system "so complicated and obscure a fabric," so devoid of all tenable hypothesis that it fails to convince. Of course Knobel expects his views to convince, but they fail with the average man, just as Ewald's fail with him. Again the motive in the authorship repels us. There are marks of human imperfection in the Scriptures, but the average believer is not ready to accept a theory which involves a cunning spirit of deception which deliberately purposes to mislead, especially when the very end of the book is to secure truth and righteousness.

There are indications of earlier authorship. We have already noted that chapter xxiv:26 reports Joshua as recording in the book of the Law. This points to the fact that he left written material. There is no allusion whatever to later conditions in Israel. The statement in ix:27 shows that the place had not yet been chosen for the permanent altar of the Lord. The reference to the Canaanites in Gezer, in xvi:10 indicates a time before Othniel was judge. Along with such indications there are occasional touches to refute the theory that the same writer gave us the Pentateuch and Joshua. For instance, a

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shorter, more archaic form for Jericho is used throughout the Pentateuch, while the fuller form is used in Joshua.

It must be remembered that Joshua stood with Moses on the high level of a noble beginning for Israel. During his life the conditions were marked by an allegiance to Jehovah which was quite in keeping with what we would expect from the generation which came out of the discipline of the desert, with a faith in God strong and earnest. But it was when Joshua died and the men of his generation died, that the time of degeneration set in. Dr. King suggests that probably a simpler theory than those already advanced by the critics will be found to satisfy the facts, and will be necessary before there will be general acceptance of the same.

What could be more reasonable than the theory that Israel had a start which was not a fragmentary beginning, out of primitive conditions, to be slowly built up through the ages; but a beginning marked by the gigantic contributions of the most unique man of the early ages, whose training fitted him to give them laws and institutions, marked by comparisons and contrasts with the laws and institutions of the surrounding nations, and having a degree of completeness at the very start which the whole setting of the history makes reasonable? The long years of degeneration easily explain all the failures of the people to obey the laws, and also make against the

theories of very elaborate development of laws and institutions by these recreant generations.

With the bulk of the Pentateuch Mosaic, breathing the atmosphere of the Mosaic time, the comments and touches of a later hand may all have adequate explanation, and the future books of history and prophecy remain forceful in their natural significance as finding meaning and authority in view of the long-established, though much disobeyed, laws of Moses. Some such theory is modestly set forth as most likely to be ultimately established. Genesis may clearly be recognized as a compilation, but the remaining four books of the Pentateuch should have a substantial unity from the beginning. The rest of the Old Testament makes no such claim for its authorship as does the Pentateuch. Much of it comes from unknown writers, whose identity is relatively unimportant; but Moses stands out as the dominant personality of Hebrew history, and will maintain his place.

XVI

THE BOOKS OF JUDGES AND SAMUEL

THE book of Judges is not technically a history, but a collection of narratives relating certain important incidents which occurred during that time of imperfect organization extending from the occupation of Canaan to the establishment of the monarchy. The chronology of those early years is uncertain, due not only to the fact that the time of Israel's sojourn in Egypt is a matter of debate, but also to the fact that the figures in the records seem to have suffered in transmission. Wherever we find difficulties in Scripture with figures, it is reasonable to believe the historian was accurate, but that copyists or compilers have made the mistakes which occasion uncertainty about some of the records. The narratives in this book appear to be extracts from tribal annals. They are notable incidents, selected in accord with the great plan which dominates the whole record, to illustrate the mercy and power of the covenant God, to denounce idolatry, and to confirm the people in their faith and obedience. The minute details suggest early material from which the

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record is compiled, but indications point to the time of Saul as the period of its compilation.

The special fact to be noted which bears upon the critical problem is that the records maintain silence concerning the services of the Tabernacle. Consequently it is urged that no Tabernacle service existed, and indeed that there was no Tabernacle. But the analysis of the character of the book throws light upon this silence. The narrative reveals troublous times after the death of Joshua and through the entire period. National unity had never been realized, and the few facts recorded point to tribal isolation and even periods of tribal antagonism. After the death of Phineas as high priest, the central worship at Shiloh lost its prestige, and the several tribes had their own places of worship, and at times their own priests, as in the case of Micah recorded in chapter xvii. Between Phineas and Eli the priesthood degenerated and idolatry supplanted the worship of Jehovah. Yet we read in chapter xviii:31 "all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh," and again in chapter xx:27 "the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days." The fact that the ark was neglected is not proof that it did not exist. Moreover in chapters xvii, xix, and xx we find references to the high priest and to the Levites as the ministers of God.

Reference is made to this subject here, for we shall find occasion later to recall it as involved in the theory of a gradual development

of the laws and institutions of Israel, to which we have already alluded. This theory involves the entire literature of the Old Testament. Doubtless there was an evolution of the national life in all of its features; but it is all consistent with the fact that Israel was established in the theocratic institutions by Moses. One of the main arguments connected with this general theory is that there developed a priestly caste which did not hesitate to do anything to secure prestige, and that the priests changed the records, going back to the beginning and putting into the narrative these elaborate descriptions of ritual and ceremonial to secure the evidence of the divine sanction to their claims. We have discussed the principle involved in this theory, and shall return to it again. At this point the reader will note how the absence of mention of the observance of the worship of God in the book of Judges is claimed to support this theory against the standing of the priesthood. We have pointed out the line of explanation. We well know that high offices have often been maintained though their occupants were unworthy.

The Books of Samuel are one book, wherein we find the organizer of national life at work in Israel. Out of the disordered conditions of the times of the Judges he brought an approach to unity and federation among the tribes. The books of Judges and Samuel both abound in evidences of a knowledge of the Pentateuchal lit-

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erature. At times the verbal quotations show the writer of Samuel to be familiar with the narratives of Judges, as 1 Sam. xii:9 and 2 Sam. xi:21. The work of Eli evidently contributed much to make the way ready for Samuel, and it is most significant that Eli was priest as well as judge, as was also Samuel. What could more clearly point to a prestige of the priesthood which is not in need of artificial explanation?

The foundation of Samuel's reforms was the restoration of the moral and religious life of the people, putting down idolatry and witchcraft. The Philistine invasion again involves the Ark of the Covenant, and the narrative constantly breathes the spirit of a recognition of God's laws, given long before, but neglected. Samuel established schools, and the very subject of study in them was the law of Moses, and the history of Jehovah's leadings. Samuel also established, under protest, a constitutional monarchy, whose law for king and people was the law given by Moses at Sinai.

The second book of Samuel touches the life and work of David, and is to be considered in connection with the critical problem for two things. First, for its history of the establishment of the kingdom by David. This record is essential to Holy Scripture, and is vitally important to that conception of divine activity in the history of Israel which makes that history much more than a natural growth. To the aver-

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age man it bears the features of historic accuracy and personal knowledge. It also begins a chronology which may fairly be fixed. This book is also important as furnishing the historic setting to some of the Psalms. The student will be able to understand some of the psalms as he could not without this record. The intensity of spiritual struggle which has so profoundly stirred the human heart is the very inscription of the biography recorded here, and breathes the reality of a life that knows the varied experiences of a sinful heart which has found forgiveness and peace with God.

XVII

THE BOOKS OF KINGS AND CHRONICLES

THESE books are considered together since their relations are involved in some of the most serious problems in our study. They both are in general accord with the great plan of the Bible, and therefore do not give a full account of the history reviewed, but seek to show how the rise or fall, the glory or decline, of either or both of the divided kingdoms were the results of piety and faithfulness, or of idolatry and irreligion. Hence much more space is given to some kings and prophets than to others.

THE BOOK OF KINGS

This is one book in the Hebrew. It reviews the history from the time of Samuel to the disruption, and then parallels the movements of Israel and Judah. The critics generally agree in giving this book first rank among the historical materials of the Old Testament. The historian draws upon his resources according to the plan already noted, and frequently refers to fuller details to be found elsewhere. He covers a period of about four hundred years, and mentions the *Book of Solomon*, and the *Book of the*

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Kings of Judah. It would seem probable that the present form was given to the book about the time of the Captivity, the material being drawn from contemporaneous records.

THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES

In Hastings' new *Dictionary of the Bible* the article on *Chronicles* is from the pen of Dr. Francis Brown. The general reader who would be interested in studying a specimen of Higher Criticism at its best will be rewarded by examining this article. For acumen of scholarship, for painstaking detail, for reverent spirit, this article rises to the highest level of Criticism. The writer cannot agree with all of Dr. Brown's conclusions, but commends the spirit of his work. This book is also one in the original, and seems to be of a supplementary character. Most of the early manuscripts place it near the last in the Old Testament collection, but it is placed with *Kings* because of its similarity in contents. Its authorship was almost certainly after the exile. The fact that *Chronicles* and *Kings* contain passages almost word for word alike points to the Book of *Kings* as the source of much of its material, or to the same sources which the author of *Kings* used. It refers to the *Acts of Solomon*, the *Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah*, the *Book of Shemaiah the Prophet* and *Iddo the Seer*, also the books of the *Kings of Israel and Judah*. This last is probably our book of *Kings*.

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Indications point to *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* as coming from the same atmosphere, and possibly from the same writer. After its tables of genealogy, this book gives some attention to the reigns of David and Solomon, and then follows the fortunes of the kings of Judah.

The book of Chronicles presents serious difficulties to the student. Its place in the Old Testament Canon was tardily granted. Where its narrative conflicts with that in Samuel or Kings, it is reasonable to give the earlier books the preference, as having greater reliability. For instance we read in 2 Chron. xiii:3 that Rehoboam's army, at the succession of Abijah, numbered 400,000 men, while that of Jereboam numbered 800,000. But in 1 Kings xii:21 we are told the army of Rehoboam numbered 180,000. At the battle of Waterloo the French army numbered 72,000 men, while the allied forces numbered 91,000. We can only look upon the smaller number as nearer the fact. Dr. Brown says: "It would be unjust to call the Chronicler a falsifier. He shows himself, on the contrary, as a man of great sincerity and moral earnestness. . . . His view of the past is that of a son of his own age, in whom the historical imagination had not been largely developed. . . . David and Solomon he idealized, depicting the religion of their time according to what seemed to him the necessary conditions of righteousness." Dr. Brown adds: "It follows that the value of Chronicles is

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not mainly that of an accurate record of past events. Nevertheless, its value is very great. It is, however, the value of a sermon more than of a history. . . . The knowledge the author gives us of his own time, also is historically important. The fact that he clothes old history with his own contemporary habits makes his own time more intelligible to us."

ACTUAL AND ALLEGED DISCREPANCIES

Perhaps there is no more appropriate place than this to discuss discrepancies, for the Book of Chronicles suggests more than any other. Mention has been made of the difficulties involved in the large numbers given at times. One instance additional will suffice. In 1 Chron. v: 21 the capture of the Hagarites includes "100,000 prisoners, 50,000 camels, 250,000 sheep and 2,000 asses." It seems impossible to avoid the conviction of exaggeration here, whether by the original writer, or some later copyist or editor. The same person may have enlarged some of the figures in earlier records, as in the book of Numbers, because he thought it important to give the impression which goes with the greatness of numbers. These features are there; but we realize that they do not hinder the truth which shines all about them. Just how and when they originated we can never know. It is not important that we should, for they are incidental,

not fundamental, to the teaching of the history. As has been said, they are but "specks of sandstone in the marble temple."

But more important is the fact that many alleged discrepancies do not appear so evident upon careful examination. One or two instances must suffice, though there are many. We are told that 2 Chron. xiv:3-5 and xv:17 contradict each other. In the first passage we read that "Asa took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places . . . and took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images." In the second passage we read of a time toward the end of his reign of forty-one years, "but the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days." The preceding verse informs us that Asa removed his mother from being queen "because she had made an idol in a grove, and Asa cut down her idol and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron." This is a clear side light on the two statements. Asa issued a proclamation that every altar should be destroyed and actually executed the law in all the cities. For a time the abomination was abated. But when his own mother encouraged idolatry, it is not strange that it should creep in again during his reign, though the king himself proved faithful. It is not stated that it was allowed in the cities, whence Asa had driven out the altars. Surely only common sense

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interpretation is needed to see that there is no contradiction here!

Another charge is that Chronicles frequently contradicts statements in other books. One of the most famous alleged instances is that of 2 Sam. xxiv:24 and 1 Chron. xxi:22-25. Upon reading the two passages it is at once apparent that Ornan desired David, who has offered to buy the place of the threshing floor, to accept the oxen and wheat and wood for an altar and offerings. But David refuses to accept anything as a gift. It does not appear that Ornan wished to give the land, but did offer the oxen, wheat, etc. Now in Samuel it is in connection with the purchase of the oxen that David paid fifty shekels of silver. But in Chronicles it is clearly asserted that the price of *the place* whereon the threshing floor stood was six hundred shekels of gold. We learn that Solomon built the temple on this land, and it must have been much larger than the actual space used for the threshing floor. And since David insisted on paying the full value for everything purchased, it is certainly far more reasonable to accept the exact statements given, than to say with the critics that the writer of Chronicles thought the smaller sum unworthy of a royal purchaser, and therefore placed the larger sum in his record of his transaction. There is no contradiction whatever. Putting both accounts together, as they may quite reasonably be placed, it follows that David paid six hundred shekels in

gold for the land, and fifty shekels in silver for the oxen, wheat, etc.

THE PRIESTS, THE TABERNACLE AND THE TEMPLE

We come now to one of the most serious discussions in all the Old Testament. We have preferred to take up the subject at this point, for the contention involves the whole of the historic material. DeWette and other critics have urged that Chronicles is the book which especially betrays priestly design and ambition. DeWette charges the writer with unscrupulous indulgences of strong Levitical prejudices, writing up everything belonging to Judah looking in the ecclesiastical direction. But certain facts make against this assumption. What could be more natural, with the rebuilding of the Temple, than to exalt its place and the importance of its services in the minds of the people? Any historian, anxious to teach the great lesson of the suffering and discipline of the Captivity, must have realized the necessity of emphasizing the supreme place of the nation's religious life, the neglect of which had proved so disastrous in the past. This fact alone justifies fully the dominant tone of the book of Chronicles. It is the charter of reconstruction of a shattered kingdom on its proper historical basis, as a theocracy in whose life the living God has His throne in the hearts of a penitent people. De Wette further charges the writer as having a weak leaning toward the super-

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natural. But it is a plain fact that more of the miraculous is recorded in Samuel and Kings than in Chronicles.

But the most searching of all the revolutionary theories of the critics is that which asserts that there was no Tabernacle in the wilderness, and no Tabernacle service previous to the Temple! Wellhausen, in *The History of Israel*, is the champion of this view. He claims the whole story was a priestly fiction, suggested from the Temple of Solomon, the ideas of that Temple being thrown back upon the preceding ages in order to give force to the doctrine of the unity of the place of worship, and so to give more power and influence to the priests and to the reforming kings in their work. The further reason given for this theory is that the early ideas of religion were very low and primitive in Israel, as everywhere. Hence the Tabernacle and its worship were too much in advance of the people to have existed in the time of Moses, and could not have been developed in that age. But the priests in the Temple felt the necessity of something as a prior existence and set their imaginations to work to fill up the gap, with the result which we see!

Let him believe it who can! The writer cannot! Geike, in *Hours With the Bible*, points out that "sacred arks had been seen in every temple in Egypt, as the shrines of the idols, or of some object equally sacred and idolatrous."

Jehovah proposed to have just such a familiar shrine for His dwelling place with His people, lifted above the idolatrous plane of the surrounding nations. Stanley in his *History of the Jewish Church* shows that the material used points to Egypt, to the wilderness and to the region of the Red Sea, and emphasizes the fact that the names of the architects of the Temple are lost, but the names of the builders of the Tabernacle are recorded. To say the whole story of Moses in all his doings as builder of the Tabernacle is one long fabrication, and that all the references in the Scriptures between the time of Moses and that of Solomon were shrewd interpolations, is the most stupendous proposition of all which the critics venture to make. It works havoc with the record, and were it not that so many critics seriously accept the view, we would not deem it needful to dwell upon it. This theory tends to shake the confidence of the average man in the whole critical teaching more than any other phase of the movement.

Some brief considerations must suffice. The Scriptures which follow the account in Exodus—law, history, prophecy, psalms—teem with allusions to the Tabernacle, naturally woven into the narrative. To object to it because it is called the “house of God” is to deny a natural figure of language. Jacob applied the same term to the rugged rocks of Bethel. The great argument offered is that the law insists upon one place of

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worship, but the record shows many places to have been used. Hence there was no one special place of worship. But the history makes it plain that the Tabernacle rested at Gilgal and was later established at Shiloh, which was the centre of worship and inquiry of God. (Judges xx:26-27 and xxi.) Exceptional worship by Joshua on Mt. Ebal (x:43), and by the two and a half tribes beyond the river (xxii), is justified by the exceptional conditions which are set forth in the record.

Later at Gibeah David and Solomon came because "there was the Tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord had made in the wilderness." Then in 1 Kings viii:4 the account of the connections between the Tabernacle and the Temple are told in a plain, natural way. Much is made by some of the apparent fact that the altars are not made of earth, as commanded. But it is quite reasonable to think that the frames of the altars were filled with earth always at the place of the camp. Again it is urged that several places in the record state that God did not command the offering of sacrifices; but it is astonishing to read some of these comments, when it is perfectly evident that the reference in such cases is to spiritual sincerity when outward forms are used. The contrite heart gives value to the external form. Nothing else is involved in these passages. There was one special place of worship, which was the place

of the abode of the Tabernacle through the years. Various conditions and events left the continuity of worship broken, but the place never lost its unique significance until the Temple superseded it as the abiding house of God.

Let the reader note the statements in Joshua viii:31-34, xiii:14, xviii:1, and consider the perfect naturalness of the record. Recall the accounts of Eli and Samuel. Note 1 Kings ii:2-3, and xi:34 as involving previous legislation. Note Jereboam's sin to be in ignoring the Levites as priests, 1 Kings xii:27-31. Wellhausen admits the apparent early setting of the story, but says the writer "tries hard to imitate the costume of the Mosaic period and to disguise his own!" He adds:—"The priestly code guards itself against all references to later times and settled life in Canaan, which both in the Jehovistic book of the Covenant and in Deuteronomy are the express basis of the legislation. It keeps itself carefully and strictly within the limits of the situation in the wilderness, for which in all seriousness it seeks to give the law!" This is really astonishing!

The plain fact is that all the codes have references to the settled life of Canaan, making provision therefor. See Ex. xxxiii:2-3, and xxxiv, Lev. xix:9-10, xx:22-24 and xxiii. Let it be granted the legislation was in advance of the people. So it is now! The Dark Ages in Israel's history came between the high level of

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the time of Moses and Joshua and the reign of David, and then again there was a general decline of the divided kingdoms with occasional reformations. But the straightforward history of the persisting recognition of God's authority from the beginning, through all the defections of the people, points to a historic basis which was no fiction of after centuries, but the abiding sense of Mosaic law and institution through the years of Israel's history. No! This astounding theory of the critics will never be accepted by the average man, for the facts are against it.

XVIII

THE POETICAL BOOKS

THE poetical books of the Bible do not demand special attention in a discussion of biblical Criticism, partly because much of the material is anonymous, and partly because it is not so vitally related to the historic structure of the national life of Israel. From the time of Moses and Job to that of the later prophets the poet had more or less place in the literary and religious culture of the people. Of course the critics have various theories about all these productions; but they are of secondary importance. The grouping will include the wisdom literature and the songs and psalms.

THE BOOK OF JOB

The book of Job is mainly poetry, with prose introduction and conclusion. The difference in style and thought between the prose and poetry is quite marked, and hence the unity of the book has been questioned. Yet even Ewald says: "The prosaic words harmonize thoroughly with the old poem in subjective matter and thoughts, so far as prose can be like poetry." Mr. Froude says: "The book of Job is now considered to be, beyond all doubt, a genuine Hebrew original, completed by its writer almost in the form in

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which it now remains to us. The questions on the authenticity of the prologue and epilogue, which were once thought important, have given way before a more sound conception of the dramatic unity of the entire poem." It is an age-long cry of the human heart in the effort to comprehend the relation of God, righteous and loving, to human suffering.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The book of Psalms is designated in the Hebrew a book of praises and also a book of prayers. The two terms are fairly descriptive of the general character of the work, which reveals throughout a highly devotional spirit. Lyrical compositions from the earliest times among the Hebrews had titles and superscriptions attached, indicating the theme, or the name of the writer, or perhaps specifying some incident as historic explanation. There are various theories about the titles of the Psalms, the discussion being concerned mainly about the time of their composition. But for the most part, when we go beyond the face of the record, it is simply a matter of guess-work. Ambrose of Milan wrote: "Although all divine Scripture breathes the grace of God, yet sweet beyond all others is this book of Psalms. History instructs, the Law teaches, prophecy announces, rebuke chastens, morality persuades; but in the book of Psalms we have the fruit of all these, and a

kind of medicine for the salvation of man." Calvin said: "I am wont to style this book an anatomy of all parts of the soul, for no one will discover in himself a single feeling whereof the image is not reflected in this mirror." Concerning the twenty-third psalm, Mr. Beecher said: "It has charmed more griefs to rest than all the philosophy of the world."

THE SONG OF SONGS WHICH IS SOLOMON'S

This song has been the subject of much discussion. The opinions of the critics vary, as they always do when variation is possible. Different periods have been contended for as the time when this song was written. Many have also argued against its right to a place in the Canon. The average man is not much concerned about the matter, for he does not consider this book as of supreme importance in the sacred Canon. It has not appealed to him with any special power or helpfulness. It is not possible to come to much certainty about the various subjects discussed, and the book remains with whatever it may contribute to the students of its pages. Some question its helpfulness, while others deem it an expression of spiritual truth.

THE WISDOM LITERATURE

This includes Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. The utterances of the prophets partake largely of the character of the proverb, but stand in a class by

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themselves. The tone of the book of Proverbs is moral and intellectual rather than distinctively religious. This renders it none the less spiritual in its force because it is full of the realities of life and character in its teachings. Many writers doubtless contributed to the collection. One of the most striking features of the book is the absence of that which is distinctively Jewish. Because of this it becomes more readily a universal teacher. It deals not with local institutions nor external ceremonies, but with the real life of the individual soul having to do with the eternal verities. The book of Ecclesiastes breathes much of the same literary atmosphere as Proverbs. The time of its composition is uncertain. Probably its suggestion of a continuous homily on the vanity of human interests explains its recognition in a separate form.

THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

This book may be mentioned here. One of the interesting results of critical study has been the discovery of a great lyric movement among the conquered Jews, both at Babylon and elsewhere. Many of the Psalms reflect the atmosphere of captivity, where the great cry is "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem!" The note of grief appears conspicuous in the book of Lamentations, and the captive heart breaks in sorrow, or revives in hope of a better day when God's deliverance shall be revealed.

XIX

THE MAJOR PROPHETS

FOR the most part the sixteen books which are classed as the Major and Minor Prophets do not demand special consideration in this study of the subject. Most of them are accepted as reflecting the spirit and conditions of the time at which the prophet lived whose name is connected with the message. These men are preeminently God's spokesmen, and not simply, or even fundamentally, foretellers of future events. Perhaps three of the list have engaged the critics in special discussion, namely Isaiah, Jonah and Daniel.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

In connection with the discussion of this Book we have a very striking illustration of the difference of view maintained by high authorities. In the University of Oxford there are two professors, men working side by side in the faculty of that great institution, both experts in the department of Semitic languages. One is Prof. S. R. Driver, Regius Professor of Hebrew, the other is Professor D. S. Margoliouth, Laudian

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Professor of Arabic. Prof. Driver's *Introduction* is standard in the realm of criticism. In that book he favours the view of a dual authorship, not to say plural authorship of the contents of these sixty-six chapters. More than a century ago this theory was put forth by Dr. Koppe and was more or less favourably entertained, until Ewald gave it the distinct impulse which abides, though Ewald finds no less than seven authors. Dr. Driver accords with the general view which has been prevalent that the first thirty-five chapters were written by Isaiah, but is convinced that chapters xl-lxvi were written by a later author. Those four chapters of history, xxxvi-xxxix, generally identified with the first part, do not seem to be involved in the more distinctive problem which deals with the two sections called more especially prophecy.

The reader soon discovers certain marks of difference between these two parts of the book. The first part presents the great enemy of Israel as being Assyria, and is largely denunciatory, picturing the Messiah as a mighty king and ruler. Part second deals with Babylon as Israel's enemy, is largely consolatory, and presents the Messiah as a suffering victim, a meek and lowly redeemer. There are abundant indications that the book is a collection of utterances delivered from time to time, the chronological order in the arrangement appearing throughout. Prof. Driver holds that a short section of the early part is written

by an exilic writer; but his main contention is that chapters xl-lxvi, must have been written by an exilic author. His reasons will be presented in a moment.

It will help us to expedite the presentation, if we consider in connection with Dr. Driver's view, that of Prof. Margoliouth. The Arabic professor does not agree with the Hebrew professor. In his book on *Lines of Defense of The Biblical Revelation*, Prof. Margoliouth gives the average man reason to pause before he accepts the views of the critics. As a preliminary suggestion he calls attention to the fact that the twelve minor prophets have given us about the same amount of material as is given in the Book of Isaiah. None of these men rank with Isaiah for literary merit, or thrills as does Isaiah; yet they are all kept distinct. How comes it then that some brilliant genius of half of Isaiah is forgotten and unknown? This suggestion is of some value, and yet it must be remembered that we have important books, like the Epistle to the Hebrews, whose author is unknown.

Prof. Driver holds that we have three independent lines of argument to prove that a later author wrote the second part of the book. His first argument is from the internal evidence, which he claims shows the book to have been written at the time of the Babylonian captivity. The traditional view is that Isaiah was carried

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forward by the spirit of prophecy into a vision of the future, which is here recorded. But Dr. Driver urges that the prophet always spoke primarily to his own time, and while he sometimes looked into the future, his main purpose was to bring a lesson to the people of his own time to lead them to faithfulness. He claims that this section does not predict exile, but presupposes it, and mainly promises deliverance. The appearance of the name of Cyrus is one of the special points urged by this school as very strongly presumptive against an authorship of an earlier time. Moreover reference is to Jerusalem as ruined and deserted.

To this claim Prof. Margoliouth answers by pointing out the fact that in the third chapter Jerusalem is described as fallen and Judah as destroyed. If this be prediction in the third chapter, why not in the later section? As to the mention of the name of Cyrus, he points out that the author of the second section makes the particular claim that Jehovah is proving His power by predicting the future, and challenging other gods to show like ability, as in xlv: 11-19, "Thus saith Jehovah, the holy one of Israel, ask me things to come, concerning my sons and concerning my daughters. . . . I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth. . . . Let the strange gods shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that they are gods." Yet Prof. Driver says this section is not

predictive, while his fellow-professor says that is its greatest claim.

The further fact is pointed out by Prof. Margoliouth that the writer, though he uses the name of Cyrus, does not show any familiarity with Persia. Ezekiel is quite familiar with this name, but it is unknown to the second Isaiah. Moreover the writer knows the rocks and hills, the lakes and rivers, the trees and customs of Palestine, but does not give a hint of the plains of Babylon. The Arabic professor gives at length facts concerning words that appear in the first Isaiah, which are also evidently familiar to the second Isaiah, but appear nowhere else in the Old Testament. It should be noted in passing that Dr. Cheyne, another Oxford professor, and a radical critic, says: "Some passages of second Isaiah are in various degrees, really favourable to the theory of a Palestinian origin." The fact is that this evidence of Palestinian atmosphere in the second part of the book has led some later critics to hold that it was written in Palestine after the writer had returned from Babylon!

The second argument by Dr. Driver is based on the difference of style which he claims exists between the two parts of the book. He urges this at some length, setting forth different expressions, different imagery, etc. But the Arabic professor refuses to place the value upon this argument which the Hebrew professor would urge. He says arguments drawn from language

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and style are too inconclusive to have scientific value. He urges that the same writer, in different periods of his life, may have quite a different style, phrases, methods of thought, etc. He then proceeds to show what appear to him indications of identity of style in the two parts of the book.

It may also be mentioned that Dr. Cheyne allows that the "Great Unknown," as he describes the second Isaiah, often imitated Isaiah's style and knew his prophecies by heart. He goes on to argue that unity of style does not prove unity of authorship. That is to say, he does not urge his view of plural Isaiahs from the difference of style, but from the character of the contents. Let the reader go carefully over these sixty-six chapters, and he will discover just as great a variety of style between different parts of both the first and second sections as appear between the sections themselves. If the evidence points to more than one author, it must be granted that it justifies six or seven. We cannot stop with two, if we need more than one to explain the record. We have referred in a former chapter to the great differences in style in the writings of men well known, as Gladstone and Lowell.

Dr. Driver's third argument is that the theological ideas are very different in the two parts of the book. On this point the Arabic professor does not dwell; but he shows with striking force

that the idolatrous practices rebuked by the second Isaiah are pre-exilic rites, not practiced during or after the exile! What significance could such rebukes have at a later time, after the objectionable practices had ceased? As to different theological views, does not the changed condition demand it? The earlier period is marked by warnings of punishment because of sin, when the authority of God as king is insisted upon, and disobedience to His law threatened with dire penalties. Yet in both sections of the book, as in all the prophets, this warning is followed by promises of forgiveness to repentant Israel, and in this connection the vision of the great redemption finds its starting point in the prophet's mind. Paul has different theological views in different letters, simply because he was writing to people whose conditions were different. In the writer's judgment it is not especially important that all of the book should have been written by one man. Therefore it is with no special zeal of opinion that the subject is considered. But the simple fact remains that there does not seem sufficient evidence to demand the conviction that Isaiah may not have written the substantial contents of the entire book which bears his name.

THE BOOKS OF JEREMIAH AND EZEKIEL

In former chapters we have mentioned the theories of the critics which assign the authorship of Deuteronomy to Jeremiah. There is con-

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stant evidence that Jeremiah was familiar with the contents of Deuteronomy, for the book which carries the name of the prophet is full of allusions to the last book of the Pentateuch. The discovery of that book in the temple explains the fact that special attention would be given to it by the prophet and the people. Deuteronomy was, so to speak, their Bible for the time, and its contents were especially adapted to their needs. The student of this material will discover evidences of more or less broken character to the record. The differences between the Hebrew and the Greek texts, later translations, are quite numerous, the Greek text being about one-eighth shorter than the Hebrew. We are told that when Jehoiakim destroyed the roll which Jeremiah had prepared, the prophet dictated the substance again to Baruch the scribe. This probably forms an earlier part of the book, and the later sections suggest periods after the fall of Jerusalem and during the exile, as the time of authorship. There is no such movement of style and splendour of literary mastery here as in Isaiah, though there is dramatic power which makes itself felt.

The book of Ezekiel presents a mingling of history with imagery in such uncertain manner as to leave one in doubt as to what is intended to be historic, and what symbolic. There is no criterion by which we can surely distinguish these parts. Ezekiel exercised a public ministry among his people, beginning previous to the siege of

Jerusalem, and continuing after the fall of the city. The news of this calamity crushes the exiles, and the stern tone of the prophet in his earlier utterances is changed into one of hope for restoration. Fresh captives swelled the ranks of the exiles, and probably brought the rolls of Jeremiah to the Babylonian prophet, for he shows the influence of Jeremiah in much of his teaching. His office of prophet was peculiar, for as an exile he seems to have been a sort of pastor to his fellow-exiles, and his emphasis of his sense of responsibility for his countrymen further suggests this character of his work. The unity and authenticity of his writings have been contested by very few critics. The book bears the stamp of a single mind, and is arranged in so clear a plan that the literary design is apparent. The marvelous imagination of the man is the most striking feature of the book. His dominant teaching was the giving to Israel the Messianic hope as a new ideal in the nation's life, and the starting point of a new religious development.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

This book is the apocalyptic chapter of the Old Testament. There is a distinction between prophecy and apocalypse. Prophecy had immediate bearing on the time, and any picture it might present of the future was given as a warning or an incentive in view of present conditions. Apocalypse was this and more. It took on a more

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sublime suggestion of God's great plan for the future, without so much of immediate connection of current events, though not ignoring them. Moreover the apocalypse has a symbolism of its own, built up by a fancy different from the ordinary poetic imagination of the prophet, which largely draws its figures from nature. The book of Daniel abounds in this distinctive symbolism of the apocalypse, which involves the nations in the great sweep of the world-movement through the ages.

In the writer's judgment its character points to the time of the Captivity for its origin, rather than to a later time, for after the return to Palestine the nation became more provincial than ever, with narrow visions and a more circumscribed life. The book is written in two languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. Several explanations are offered for this unusual fact, but no one is satisfactory. Naturally the two languages suggest composite authorship, yet the sections of language do not coincide with the divisions in the thought. It is also claimed that Daniel is of much later origin because of the presence of certain modern words in the text. There are only eight of these words, and Archdeacon Farrar says, "on this part of the subject there has been a great deal of rash, incompetent assertion." An interesting fact in English literature may serve to throw some light on this problem. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and *Piers Ploughman* were composed at the

same time. But Chaucer has many modern words not found in the other poem. This is because Chaucer was at the Court and knew foreign words before they came into general use. Just so Daniel at Court would know some such words, which would not be found in the writings of Haggai or Malachi.

The general theory of the critics is that the book of Daniel is not history, but a religious novel, written in the Maccabean age. The fact of the two languages used is a strong point against this theory. It is claimed the writer is describing Antiochus Epiphanes under the names of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and Darius, while Daniel is the picture of the ideal Jew, who is meant to be a reminder of Joseph. But the incidents fail to justify this theory, for it is based on the notion that the book is intended to incite the Jews to take up arms against Antiochus. The effect of the narrative is just the opposite, leading to a passive attitude. Moreover Daniel is not the ideal Jew, for he is nowhere concerned about the return of his people from captivity. The theory of the critics appears to break down. The Book of Baruch is clearly borrowed from Daniel, and Ewald puts that in the Persian period. Hence Daniel must be as early. The abiding inspiration of the book is in its uplifting picture of the overruling hand of the God of nations as He moves forward in the realization of His purpose for the redemption of His people.

XX

THE MINOR PROPHETS

IN the Hebrew these twelve books are gathered under the common title *The Book of the Twelve*. The time of the collection and arrangement of the twelve books is uncertain, though indications point to the period between 300 and 250 B. C. The best discussion of these books by a modern critical scholar is found in the two volumes from the pen of Dr. George Adam Smith. He places Amos about 755 B. C., Hosea about 745 and Micah about 722. These three he pronounces "in every respect—originality, comprehensiveness, influence upon other prophets—the greatest of the twelve." He follows Micah with Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk, placing them in the second half of the seventh century, B. C. Obadiah and Joel he counts of uncertain date, though both in their present form seem to be late. Jonah is unique and to be placed in a class by itself, while Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi are after the exile. He tells us this arrangement does not mean that the whole of a book belongs to the date given, or that it was all written by the man whose name it bears. He says: "Hands have been busy with the texts of the

books long after the authors of these must have passed away." But this gives us the substantial material of the books identified with the prophets whose names they bear.

Dr. Smith says:—"Our Twelve do more than carry us from beginning to end of the Prophetic Period. Of second rank as are most of the heights of this mountain range, they yet bring forth and speed on their way not a few of the streams of living water which have nourished later ages and are flowing to-day. Impetuous cataracts of righteousness—let it roll on like water, and justice as an everlasting stream; the irrepressible love of God to sinful men; the perseverance and pursuits of His grace; His truth that goes forth richly upon the heathen; the hope of the Saviour of mankind, the outpouring of the Spirit; counsels of patience; impulses of tenderness and of healing; melodies innumerable—all sprang so strongly that the world hears and feels them still." When Dr. Smith asserts concerning these writings that in the examination of the text he may have occasion to suspect some passages, and to defend others which seem to him unjustly attacked, we realize that here, as elsewhere, Criticism finds difficulties in these books which have not yet been solved.

"The genuineness of the bulk of the Book of Amos is not doubted by any critic" is the assurance of Dr. Smith, and he traces a logical and historical development through its chapters.

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Hosea consists of two sections which differ in subject-matter and style. Therefore many critics hold to two Hoseas, but Dr. Smith believes in the unity of its authorship because, "the historic changes in Israel, and therefore the difference of occasion and motive, explain fully the altered outlook and the altered style." He shows that in both sections "the religious principles are identical, and many of the characteristic expressions; while the whole book breathes throughout the same urgent and jealous temper which renders Hosea's personality so distinctive among the prophets."

The date of Micah has been the subject of much discussion. It is the opinion of many critics that interpolations are found, and breaks in the logical sequence, especially of chapters iv and v. Says Dr. Smith: "We ought not to overlook the remarkable fact that those who have recently written the fullest monographs on Micah incline to believe in the genuineness of the book as a whole." He specifies Wildeboer, Von Ryssel and Elhorst, and declares Cheyne to be incorrect in asserting that it is "becoming more and more doubtful whether more than two or three fragments of the heterogeneous collection of fragments in chapters iv-vii can have come from that prophet." Dr. Smith then argues at some length for the substantial unity of the book as probably written by Micah.

The remaining nine prophets present many

difficulties to critical scholarship. Questions of integrity and related problems arise, but the critical and textual value of these books is not so great as the historical. They present a development of Hebrew prophecy of notable interest. We see in them "the spirit and style of classic prophecy of Israel gradually dissolving into other forms of religious thought and feeling." The reader is referred to Dr. Smith's discussion of these subjects. Special mention is here made of his reference to Jonah. He says: "In the Book of Jonah, though it is parable and not history, we see a great recovery and expansion of the best elements of prophecy. God's character and Israel's true mission to the world are revealed in the spirit of Hosea, and of the Seer of the Exile, with much of the tenderness, the insight, the analysis of character and even the humour of classic prophecy. These qualities raise the Book of Jonah, though it is probably the last of the twelve, to the highest rank among them. No book is more worthy to stand by the side of Isaiah xl-lv; none is nearer in spirit to the New Testament." The query arises as to whether these superior qualities in the book of Jonah do not point to an earlier time for its authorship than Dr. Smith believes. It gives evidence of later touches in its present form, but it breathes a different atmosphere from that of the other prophets of the post-exilic period.

The question as to how much of the prophetic

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material is to be considered history, and how much parable or allegory, naturally arises here. The student of the prophetic writings must be impressed by the fact that much of the utterance of almost every prophet, as notably Ezekiel, is a vision, with its evident lesson, or a parable with its application, as in Isaiah v. There are reasons for thinking the book of Jonah is a parable. The usual marks of Old Testament history are not fully present. As when Christ pictured a man going down to Jericho, with priest and Samaritan figuring in the story; so it is possible to consider this picture of the prophet to Nineveh, with its lesson mainly for Israel, to bring the chosen people to repentance.

Yet there is something to be said in favour of the historicity of the book. It breathes an atmosphere of action, and though its scenes are very dramatic and in quick succession, yet if the time of Jonah be fixed during the reign of Jeroboam II, as in 2 Kings xiv, as suggested by the statement that he was the son of Amittai, then the atmosphere of that "miracle period" is as natural to his activity as to that of Elijah or Elisha. Christ's reference to the experience of Jonah and to the repentance of Nineveh rather go to show something more than a parable here, whatever we may say about His custom of using Old Testament material. It is impossible, however, to prove either position, and it is not vital to the lesson of the book to

do so. The message of the book cannot be mistaken, as it sets forth, to use the words of Dr. Smith, "God's character and Israel's true mission to the world." Especially here do we behold the glory of the divine mercy shining forth.

XXI

THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

AS we approach the New Testament, the average man increases his desire to be cautious. He is convinced that no essential to the Evangelical faith can be shaken, and will not patiently listen to unwarranted hypotheses involving the very foundations of the Christian faith. He is strengthened in his conviction by the history of recent discussion regarding New Testament material. In the year 1835 David Frederick Strauss put forth his mythical theory concerning the Gospels. He denied the supernatural, argued that the Gospels were legendary, and that the account of Jesus came from the pious conceptions of early Christians who thus pictured their ideal. The theory startled Christendom, but set men to examining into the origin of the Gospels. Criticism turned to the New Testament to study both its authenticity and its literary character. The history of Christianity was traced up the stream to its fountain head, bringing the Gospel material into the first century, and some of the letters of Paul to a time within twenty-five years of the life of Christ.

Moreover the historic value of the Gospels was

brought the more clearly to the light in the emphasis of the fact that in them Christ is not described, but portrayed. They do not tell us that His words and deeds were grand and splendid; but they simply record what He said and did, and we at once realize the sublime, the divine character of it all. Now either Christ said these things, or the Gospel writers must have been able to originate His teachings. In Greek philosophy either Socrates spoke the words which Plato reports, or Plato himself was as great as Socrates is represented. But who could have conceived of the teachings of Jesus in His time? Not a Pharisee, whose conception of religion He condemned. Not a Sadducee who denied the resurrection. Not an Essene with his ascetic notions. Not the uneducated fishermen of Galilee. No! the face of the record reveals the power of the truth in a plain simple narrative of what Jesus said and did. It portrays a sinless, matchless life, the manifestation of God in the flesh. This is the verdict of Christendom. The theory of Strauss is dead and buried.

But Strauss gave an impulse to critical study which developed through Bauer and the Tübingen school to the later critics in Germany and England. These men steadily pressed back to the historic facts, and sought to ascertain the real historic value of the material. Earlier scholarship, with scholastic method, had dealt in the main with philosophical and theological ques-

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tions about the person of Christ, and other doctrinal themes, but the new Criticism examined the sources of the record itself. As the work went on, the personal Christ became more manifestly the explanation of all that was preeminent in the Apostolic age. In his scholarly book *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, Dr. Fairbairn says: "The life is a most manifest effect, existent in all the apostles, creating a new literary capability, a new ethical, social, religious spirit, a society of brother missionaries, possessed of the enthusiasm to heal and save. And once thought enters into the meaning of this new life and its value for humanity, it is forced back on its cause, and compelled to see that without Christ the greatest movement in history has neither a beginning nor an end." The fact of Christ was recognized. The question then was—What are the facts about Christ?

The material containing the record of these facts is conceded to be mainly in the three synoptic Gospels. The historic value of John's Gospel will be considered separately. It is much later than the other three. When we approach the theories of the critics regarding the synoptic records, a word of warning must be raised against the work presented in the new *Encyclopedia Biblica* published under the general supervision of Dr. Cheyne. It is likely to command wide attention, as it will assume to be an authority on the subject. But its criticism of the

Gospels is so very extreme as to leave no hope that men will have any fair idea of the various views held by scholars on the subject.

The two writers are Dr. E. A. Abbott, whose sphere is the "descriptive and analytical," and Dr. Schmiedel, of Zurich, who deals with the "historical and synthetical." Dr. Abbott says Matthew's account of the resurrection has been modified by later writers "so as to soften some of its improbabilities." He claims that the omission by the other evangelists of the account of the healing of the ear of Malchus, recorded by Luke, is "almost fatal to its authenticity," and he explains it by a corruption of the text which transforms the replacing of the sword into a replacing of the ear! He thinks many of the miracles connected with raising of the dead are "very early exaggerations arising from misunderstood metaphor," and finds himself obliged to pronounce the raising of the son of the widow of Nain as "non-historical," while the record of the resurrection of Lazarus is "mainly allegorical."

Dr. Schmiedel is even more radical and destructive. He says he does not start with "the postulate or axiom that miracles are impossible," but he offers the opinion that "some doubts as to the accuracy of the miraculous cannot fail to arise in the mind of even the strongest believer in miracles." He claims that these alleged contradictions "show only too clearly with what lack of concern for historical precision the evan-

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gelists wrote." He develops the theory that all the post-resurrection appearances were visions like that of Paul, and in many other views he practically destroys the ground for the evangelical faith in the Gospels.

In reviewing this article, Principal Fairbairn says: "Dr. Abbott proves himself a sort of modern highly erudite and skeptical Talmudist; while Schmiedel, whose articles are amazingly clever and even brilliant, shows himself a hard and dry, yet almost a fierce and truculent rationalist." He further says of Schmiedel that one feels "the wonderful absence of historical Criticism, as qualifying his literary. It is marvellous to us that he so little grasps the movement of events or reads his documents in relation to them. All this is the easiest and flimsiest of historical Criticism; violent in its exegesis, arbitrary in its selection of its foundation pillars, and impossible of application to the history it despises." When a man like Dr. Fairbairn, who is open-minded and sympathetic toward the critical movement, is compelled to use such denunciatory words concerning this latest product of Criticism, the average man naturally concludes that the extreme critics will always be repudiated by even the most liberal Evangelical Christians, and finds his confidence strengthened by this assurance.

The general theory of the Evangelical critics regarding the three synoptic Gospels is presen-

ted admirably by Dr. McGiffert in *The Apostolic Age*. In substantial agreement with his statement is that of Dr. Bruce in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*. The earliest records of Christ's teachings were contained in the so-called *Logia*, or sayings of Jesus. The first writer to mention them is Papias of Hierapolis, a writer of the early second century. Eusebius, the Church historian, our best authority on the patristic writings, tells us that Papias records that "Matthew composed the *Logia* in the Hebrew language, and every one interpreted them as best he could." Dr. McGiffert says: "It is clear that they were intended primarily for disciples of Jewish birth, and more particularly for residents of Palestine." And he adds: "They were known and used at an early day by those also whose every day speech was Greek. Papias tells us that every one interpreted them as best he could. But it could not be long after they had made their way into the Greek speaking world before Greek translations of them were put into writing for the use of those who knew no Hebrew, and who were unable to interpret them for themselves."

He continues: "It is hardly to be supposed that no other collections of Christ's words were made than the *Logia* of Matthew. It is probable that Luke used another source than the *Logia* in chapters iv-xvii of his Gospel, and that he drew from it, for instance, the par-

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ables of the Good Samaritan, the foolish rich man, the prodigal son, the unrighteous steward, Dives and Lazarus, the unjust judge, and the Pharisee and Publican. Most of these parables bear a common character which distinguishes them from those recorded in the *Logia*, and which points to a compiler of a somewhat broader spirit and more humanistic temper than Matthew; to one who belonged in fact to another circle, and was in touch with mission work in the world at large."

Dr. McGiffert, here as elsewhere, keeps in mind certain facts which do not seem to have so much place in the work of many critics. In a valuable little book *Why Four Gospels?* Dr. D. S. Gregory presents a series of these suggestive facts which are very instructive. He reminds us that the spread of Christianity was from three main centres—Jerusalem, Antioch and Rome, where the Gospel was preached to the Jews, Greeks and Romans. Naturally the predilections, education and national traits of these three types of people would have much to do with giving special emphasis upon different parts of the Gospel story. Matthew's record is a permanent report of the way the Gospel was generally preached to the Jews. Its key note is the fulfillment of prophecy. Its teachings are especially adapted to the Jews, and several of these do not appear in Mark or Luke, whose readers would not respond to them as would the Jews.

Matthew contains no explanation of Hebrew words or Jewish customs, or comments upon Jewish geography, while all three of the other Gospels contain these for people not familiar with Jerusalem and Palestine.

The key note of Mark is power. His record has a very small amount of Christ's teaching, but throbs with energy in the record of His deeds. The spirit of the Roman is in mind as the narrative moves forward. It is the Roman centurion at the cross who is reported only by Mark as exclaiming "Truly this man was the Son of God!" Luke, as Dr. McGiffert points out, has much material not found in either of the other two. His dominant tone is the broader humanity of the Greeks. Divide Luke into one hundred parts, and only forty-one parts are in common with the other Gospels, while fifty-nine parts are peculiar to itself. Luke gives us the only specific account of the Perean ministry.

Now all this points not only to a degree of independence in authorship not recognized by many critics, but points as well to an original purpose in each Gospel which gives it a unity and value too little appreciated. The oral Gospel, repeated through twenty or thirty years, must have become crystallized into familiar forms of statements, aside from any written reports, and marked by distinctive colourings in the different sections of the world where it was preached.

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These differences are so marked that we cannot overlook them, and they demand consideration in the study of their historic value. The differences in the three records only strengthen their historic validity in the light of their local settings, and the reader discovers the fulness of the account only as he combines all three of them, and appreciates that they are not contradictory, but supplementary.

When Luke presents a different version of the Lord's Prayer, for instance, it indicates that he did not have the same source that Matthew used, but that he had received the truth from reliable tradition, whether spoken or written, for the same truth is preserved, though the exact words are not used. The theory that Mark was the foundation of the records, and that Matthew and Luke both built on Mark, may or may not be correct. There are evidences, such as these suggested, pointing to an independent record in each case, gathered from the same general sources perhaps, but by no means certainly dependent on Mark or the *Logia* of Matthew. The great fact to be emphasized is that critical scholarship is practically agreed in fixing the historical material in the second half of the first century, where we have it much nearer to the time of Christ than we now are to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The historic basis for our Gospel of Jesus Christ is forever established.

XXII

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

THE book of the Acts of The Apostles is the Index to the development of the Christian Church during the apostolic age. Along the lines there briefly indicated the work was carried on. Much ground is traversed, but there is sufficient statement to explain the cardinal facts in the history, especially when we consider the additional light furnished in the several apostolic epistles, most of which were probably written before this record was prepared. One opinion prevailed in the early Church regarding the authorship, namely that Luke the writer of the third Gospel was the author of this book. This view is still maintained by a large majority of leading critics. Some however do not believe the author was the companion of Paul, and among these is Dr. McGiffert. His reasons do not seem very conclusive, and illustrate his method at times, to the disappointment of the average man.

Dr. McGiffert says the supposition that the writer was a companion of Paul is "beset with serious difficulties, for the knowledge of events displayed by the author is less accurate and com-

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plete than might be expected in one who had been personally associated for any length of time with Paul himself." . . . "His work betrays a lack of knowledge concerning the latter part of Paul's career, during which the author of the "we" passages must have been intimately associated with him, at least a part of the time; and certain critical periods in Paul's life are treated as we should hardly expect them to be by one of his own companions. It seems therefore necessary to conclude that the author of the Acts was not identical with the eyewitness who appears in certain parts of the book."

When we discover the reason for Dr. McGiffert's opinion to be his disappointment in not finding what he would expect a companion of Paul to write, and that this or that account is not satisfactory to him, we wonder who shall say what ought to be expected of Paul's companion. Who shall assume that he ought to have dwelt more fully upon certain parts of Paul's career? Who is to decide what the New Testament ought to contain? Dr. George T. Purves, in his little book *The Apostolic Age*, says: "The objection that a companion of Paul ought to have given fuller information, and that he even shows ignorance of much that such a man would have known, proceeds on an arbitrary assumption concerning what Luke would be likely to record, and a failure to appreciate the plan and purpose

of the book." Renan asserts it to be "beyond doubt that this author is in very deed Luke the disciple of Paul." Both Professors Ramsay and Blass hold to this view, together with many others.

Certain facts go to prove the reasonableness of this view. In four passages the writer represents himself as the companion of Paul. The phraseology of these sections is in many respects common to that employed in the rest of the book. Sir J. Hawkins specifies seventeen words and phrases which appear in both the "we" passages and in the rest of the Acts, but nowhere else in the New Testament. He also points out twenty-seven words and phrases found in the "we" passages and in Luke's Gospel, with or without the rest of the Acts. Those who deny the identity of authorship must account for this similarity of style, and also for the appearance of the "we" passages at all. For if the writer of the rest of the book had wished to appear a companion of Paul, he would not have inserted the "we" only at these four points. The German philologist, Vogel, states the common sense view of the matter when he says that when a writer with the skill which is manifest in this book passes from the third to the first person in his narrative, every unprejudiced reader will explain it on the ground that the author thus wished modestly to intimate his own personal presence during certain events. Another fact is

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that the writer was so familiar with his facts that he did not feel any need of using the epistles of Paul, for Acts is written independently of those epistles, though most of them were available.

This fact suggests the probable time of the authorship of the Acts. The author stood sufficiently near to Paul's time to write without drawing upon the Pauline epistles. Dr. McGiffert would place the time of the authorship as late as the beginning of the second century. But his teacher, Prof. Harnack, brings the date down to about the year 80, and that time is generally accepted by the majority of scholars. It is reasonable to hold that the date must be placed after the fall of Jerusalem, as the references to that event by Luke's Gospel would indicate that it was past, and the Acts must be placed some years later. In Matthew xxiv:15, we read: "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place," etc. But in Luke xxi:20, we read: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Here the reasonable inference is that Luke's record reads in the light of accomplished history, so that the third Gospel would be placed about the year 70 or a little later, and Acts may reasonably be assigned to about 80. There are a few critics who have attempted to point out specific sources for this

book, but their efforts are most unsatisfactory. We can only surmise as to Luke's sources of information regarding those items in the record beyond his personal knowledge.

As to the historic value of the book it will suffice to quote from Prof. Ramsay who writes in *Recent Research in Bible Lands* regarding Paul's missionary journeys: "It has already ceased to be possible for a rational criticism to maintain that the narrative of these journeys is a free second-century composition; and it is rapidly ceasing to be possible to regard it as a series of first-century scraps, pieced together by a second-century compiler for his own purposes. Only a narrative written with full mastery by an eyewitness, or by one who was in communication with eyewitnesses, and able to use their accounts with delicate precision could stand the minute study that is now demanded and applied. It is not a new discovery that the perplexing variety of titles for governors and magistrates of cities is correct in every case throughout the book; but it is now becoming far clearer than before that the duties, powers, and character of the officials are all correctly delineated. Recent discoveries are enabling us to conceive precisely what these officials were in actual life; and each new step in our knowledge only makes the narrative of Acts more luminous." . . . "The very language of Acts is that of a person who had travelled in the country, and not one who had gathered his

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knowledge from books." Thus we rest in the trustworthy account of the steps by which the Christian Church was established and developed.

In connection with this account in the Acts of the early history of the Christian Church, we must consider the conspicuous fact which has figured so largely in the critical discussions of New Testament problems: namely the difference which marked the two great tendencies in the church, the Judaistic and the universal. The first colouring of the Christian thought and life was Jewish. The primary message was that Jesus was the Messiah. The first Christians were Jews who never thought of departing from their ancient customs. Yet their Christianity placed them into a new class of Jews. They recognized the Jewish law as still binding upon them. But their emphasis of the resurrection of Jesus developed an opposition on the part of the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection. The stoning of Stephen marked the outbreak of the spirit of persecution, which was followed by the dispersion. The awakening of the missionary spirit was intensified, as it was evident that the gift of the Holy Spirit was bestowed upon Samaritans and Gentiles, as well as Jews.

When Cornelius was received into the Church, being neither Jew nor proselyte, the need of a future policy became imperative. Could Gentiles be Christians without going through the door of Judaism? This was

the great question. Meanwhile Paul had been converted, and was preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles with great results. The apostles recognized Gentiles as Christians because of the gift of the Holy Spirit, but did not allow that Jewish Christians could violate any Jewish law, for instance, to eat with a Gentile, though both were Christians. At Antioch, where "the disciples were first called Christians," the uncircumcised Christians could not be allowed to fellowship with the Jews. The seriousness of this situation is at once apparent.

The process of emancipation into the true liberty of the Gospel came slowly, and mainly through the instrumentality of Paul. Paul was the most cosmopolitan Christian of the first generation of followers of Christ. He was a Jew who was a Roman citizen living in a Greek city. He could not well be provincial, yet he was an intense Jew, as his first contact with Christianity, as a persecutor, bore witness. His conversion was most thoroughgoing. The whole man was in all he did before and after. Concerning this vital experience of the apostle, Dr. McGiffert, in a passage of great power, says: "It is clear from Rom. vii:7, sq., that, zealous as Paul was in the observance of the Jewish law, and blameless as his conduct was when measured by an external standard, he had become conscious that all his efforts to attain to righteousness were a complete failure. This consciousness was evidently the re-

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sult of his perception of the fact, which was entirely overlooked by the majority of his contemporaries, and may have been long overlooked by Paul himself, that inner, as well as outer sins, sins of heart as well as of deed, were forbidden by the law; that the tenth commandment made covetousness and lust a crime, even though the lust or the covetousness never manifested itself in acts of sensuality or of dishonesty."

"That Paul, trained as he was in the superficial, legal conceptions of the Pharisees of his day, should have recognized this fact, is a mark of the profoundness of his ethical nature, and distinguishes him from most of his fellows. Only a great religious genius could thus have penetrated beneath the husk of formality to the vital kernel within. It is clear that he was no ordinary Pharisee. The condemnation which Jesus passed upon the Pharisees as a class could not have been pronounced upon him. Even though a Pharisee, he was a man after Christ's own heart. Though he apparently knew nothing as yet about Jesus's teaching, he had reached the principle of which Jesus had made so much, that all external observance of the law is worthless unless it be based upon the obedience of the heart."

After discussing Paul's struggle, and his dualistic ideas regarding the flesh and the spirit, leading up to his appreciation of the deliverance which is in Christ, Dr. McGiffert continues:

“But how was the action of the Messiah to effect that deliverance of which Paul thus felt assured? It was in answering this question that Paul departed most widely from the thought of all his predecessors and contemporaries; that he showed himself almost independent of outside influence and revealed most clearly his religious individuality and originality. Christ saves a man, he says, by entering and taking up His abode within him, by binding him indissolubly to Himself, so that it is no longer he that lives, but Christ that lives in him, so that whatever Christ does, he does, and whatever he does Christ does.

“To have believed that the work of Christ was only substitutionary in its significance; to have believed that there was only an arbitrary and forensic connection between the work of Christ and the salvation of men, would have been to do violence to his most sacred convictions, and to run counter to all his religious experience. . . . To this experience he gives clear and vivid expression in such striking utterances as the following: ‘When it pleased God to reveal His Son (not *to me*, but) in me;’ ‘I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me;’ ‘God sent forth the spirit of His Son into our hearts;’ ‘If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.’”

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This conception of Paul's personal experience throws light upon his whole attitude toward the law and ceremonial as related to the follower of Christ, as emphasized in his letters to the Romans and Galatians. The law serves to reveal a man's sin. He dies, not because he has broken a law, but because he is sinful. In Christ he dies to sin, and in the risen Christ he enters into a newness of life, in which he is no longer under law, but in the Spirit of Christ under a perfect law of liberty. It inevitably followed upon all this that Paul could no longer hold to a difference between circumcision and uncircumcision in Christ. Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian are all one in Christ. Paul's contention with Peter at Antioch, because Peter had entered into the larger truth, only to yield it at the behest of narrow Judaizers, was the consistent contention of one who had come to see clearly that the old forms had no longer an essential place for the Christian. As has been said, this twofold tendency was in the Church, and it became largely a Pauline and anti-Pauline controversy. Paul's apostleship was sometimes challenged by those who opposed him; but he, standing unflinchingly for his position, maintained it victoriously unto the end. The marks of this difference of view are found in the New Testament writings, and are often held to be important in helping to determine questions of authorship and date. It is a most instructive picture of the progress of the emancipating truth.

XXIII

THE WRITINGS OF JAMES, PETER AND JUDE

THE twenty-seven books now composing the New Testament were officially recognized as the authoritative Canon at the Council of Laodicea in the year 363. But the Canon was really fixed before that date. These books had gravitated together by virtue of their inherent divine authority, and their limited number was fixed by the response of the Church to the evidence of divine inspiration. Some apocryphal books were frequently used with approval, but it is significant that at no time did the whole Church ever recognize as authoritative Scriptures any other books than those now found in the New Testament. The difference in the atmosphere is marked as one passes from an apocryphal writing to one of these productions, even in the two or three instances where there was some hesitation about their right to a place in the Canon. Thus these twenty-seven books have become the accepted true deposit of the divine revelation. There is no reason to believe that any facts will ever come to light to disturb their place in the Canon.

A very wide spread opinion would place the

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Epistle of James as the earliest of these writings. There are those indeed who hold to its late authorship. Dr. McGiffert gives the reasons for advocating a late date to be (1) the extreme worldliness of those addressed, which seems to indicate a lapse of time since their conversion; and (2) the passage on faith and works which apparently presupposes the teaching of Paul, and the wide-spread abuse of that teaching. Against the assumption that James the brother of Jesus wrote the epistle he argues because of its remarkable silence about Jesus. "The ethical tone and standard of the work are noble and inspiring, and in many respects closely allied to the teaching of Jesus; but it is not easy to understand, and it is not altogether agreeable to contemplate the fact that a man who knew Jesus intimately should show no trace of the influence of the Master's wonderful personality."

Many scholars, however, urge an early date for the epistle on the grounds: (1) that it presents a very slight line between Judaism and Christianity. (2) It is marked by an absence of definite Christian phraseology. (3) There is an absence of dogmatic teaching, such as marks the letters of Paul and John. (4) There is no reference whatever to Gentile Christianity. It was written only to Christians who were Jews, and points to a time previous to the Council at Jerusalem. As to the discussion of faith and works, Paul's is more elaborate, which is an in-

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dication that James wrote first. The supposed contradiction between these two apostles has long since been shown to be imaginary. The references to Christ in i:1, ii:1, and v:8 are all of such worshipful character as to indicate a full appreciation of the "wonderful personality" of the Master. The subject does not call for such mention of Christ's teaching as might be naturally demanded by other themes. On the whole, the general opinion which attributes the letter to James, and considers it one of the earliest of the New Testament writings, would seem to be sustained.

The First Epistle of Peter is also marked by what may be called a practical purpose, rather than the intention to set forth any special theological teaching. He is writing for the encouragement and inspiration of those who are enduring persecution, and his watch-word is hope. James iv:6 is exactly quoted in 1 Peter v:5, indicating acquaintance with the former. Moreover many of Paul's characteristic expressions appear, as "having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible," and "Who his own self carried our sins in his body up to the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness." The writer describes himself as "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ," and the epistle is marked by many expressions which recall the words of Christ Himself, suggesting a personal contact with the

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Master. There is also an occasional resemblance between the language of the epistle and that found in Peter's sermons recorded in the Acts. Some of these are uncommon words, as when Peter speaks of the cross as the tree, both in the epistle and the sermon. His words are forcible, but simple and direct. He assimilates Old Testament thought, without caring to quote accurately.

The resemblance to Paul's style and thought has been urged against the Petrine authorship; but there is decided originality, aside from any colouring which reveals familiarity with the teachings of other apostles. There are about sixty words peculiar to the epistle, which indicates marked originality. In writing to those who had been especially under the influence of Paul, Peter most wisely incorporated much of the familiar teaching of that apostle. The salutation and tone of the letter would indicate that Peter had passed beyond the narrower Jewish view of the Gentile Christians, and included all followers of Christ in his thought as he wrote. The fact that the letter knows of persecutions would tend to fix the time of writing about the beginning of the period of those trying experiences, which would lead us to conclude that it was not written earlier than the year 65. The reference to Babylon in v: 13 has by many been deemed metaphorical, and it is held that the

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apostle meant to describe Rome by the term. It is a matter of uncertainty, and not important.

When we turn to the *Second Epistle of Peter*, we find many critics convinced that it is not the writing of the apostle. Eusebius testifies: "One epistle of Peter, which is called the First, is accepted; and this the presbyters of old have used in their writings as undoubted. But that which is circulated as his Second Epistle we have received to be not canonical. Nevertheless, as it appeared to many to be useful, it has been diligently read with the other Scriptures." There are no direct quotations from this epistle in the Christian writings of the first two centuries. Yet Clement of Rome, writing about 100, seems to refer to it when he says: "Let that Scripture be far from us which says, These things we heard in the time of our fathers, and behold we have grown old, and none of these things has happened to us." The reference would seem to be to 2 Pet. iii:4.

After the time of Eusebius the epistle seems to have been generally received. Jerome included it in his Latin translation, while seeming somewhat doubtful about it; but after his time it was generally accepted, and found its place in the Canon at Laodicea. The following points are urged against its genuineness: (1) That the writer labours unnaturally to identify himself with the apostle. (2) The reference to

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Paul in iii: 15-16 is not what would be expected from Peter. (3) There are striking differences between the two letters, both in style and thought. (4) The relation between the second chapter and the Epistle of Jude is perplexing, and suggests doubts as to the apostolic authority of the authors. (5) The resemblance between this letter and certain passages in Josephus is so close as to show that the writer must have been acquainted with works not published until after Peter was dead.

It may be said regarding these objections: That had the writer been an imitator, he would have used exactly the words used in the first epistle instead of the fuller title used here. A man uses his own name with freedom, sometimes writes his initials, sometimes the full name. The writer refers to this as his "second epistle," asserts that he was a witness of the Transfiguration, and refers to Christ's conversation recorded in John xxi: 18-19. As to the improbability of his endorsing the teachings of Paul, we may simply ask—Why not? If, as was suggested, he was writing to many who had been especially influenced by Paul, it was a very wise thing to do. There may have been very good reasons for doing so, which are not known to us. As to difference of style, it is apparent. There are more rare words than in the first epistle, though they abound in both. The second letter is less Hebraistic and better Greek. But it may be said the

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second letter gives evidence of being more hastily composed than the first. The writer had heard of the false teachers, who were already doing their injurious work in Asia Minor. Possibly the letter of Jude had come to his hand, and fired him to write in similar strain, embodying much of it in his own message. This is certainly possible, if not probable. It is quite probable that Peter came to be more proficient in Greek during the years that elapsed between his first letter and this one.

But while there are differences, there are many points of resemblance. There are fifty-eight uncommon words in the first epistle and forty-eight in the second. A writer attempting to imitate would probably have used many of these words in the second letter. But we have a number of words and phrases here which are found in the first epistle and also in the speeches of Peter recorded in the Acts. As to the difference in thought, it explains something of the difference in style. The key-note of the first letter is hope, while that of the second is knowledge. The supposed knowledge of Josephus, urged by some, is based on the appearance of a few words in Second Peter which are found in Josephus. But some of these same words are in First Peter and in some of the writings of Paul, indicating that they were in common use before Josephus. It must further be emphasized that if this had been a second-century writing it would probably have given

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more evidence of knowledge of the heresies of that time. After all has been said, there remains in this epistle a beauty and power found in no writing of the second century. Those writings are valuable, but here there is that indescribable touch of inspiration which breathes the presence and power of the Holy Spirit not felt in the writings not contained in the sacred Canon.

The Epistle of Jude, as already noted, is much like the second chapter of Second Peter. We have already indicated that it was older in its composition. Jude's epistle is the more original, while Peter's use of the material suggests the quotation of the stronger statement of Jude. This epistle is the most unique in the New Testament. Hebrew phrases and idioms betray the Jewish standpoint of the writer. It combines features of Old Testament prophecy with those of Jewish apocalyptic literature. It contains items unlike anything else in the Canon. Its style is bold and picturesque, broken and rugged. The titles of the book are very different in different manuscripts. The writer of the epistle nowhere calls himself an apostle, or hints at such a thing. He rather indicates that he is not in verse 17, where he refers to "the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." We may leave the questions of authorship, date and place, unsettled. The important fact is that the early church accepted the writing as that of a man who was in

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such touch with the apostolic life and spirit as to be stirred to a flame of impetuous denunciation of contumacious professors of the faith, and an earnest appeal to the followers of Christ to be faithful to their Lord.

XXIV

THE WRITINGS OF PAUL

THE dominant factor in the Apostolic Church was the great apostle to the Gentiles. We have spoken of the conversion and influence of Paul in the chapter on the Acts. It would be fascinating to study his life work in detail, but our task has to do with the critical discussions which have arisen regarding his New Testament epistles. We shall consider them briefly in the probable order of their composition.

The First Epistle to The Thessalonians is generally accepted as the first letter from Paul's pen of which we know. It is one of the writings whose genuineness has been almost universally acknowledged. The character of Paul has left its distinct impress here. Prof. Jowett says: "It has been objected against the genuineness of this epistle that it contains only a single statement of doctrine. But liveliness, personality, similar traits of disposition, are more difficult to invent than statements of doctrine." There are, moreover, several statements of doctrine, such as the supreme dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the deliverance from wrath effected by Him, the

resurrection of the just, and especially the second coming of Christ.

But it is evident that Paul did not purpose to elaborate a statement of doctrines in this letter. It was written for a specific, rather than a general purpose. The reports brought to him from Thessalonica led him to write to strengthen the brethren in persecution, and to warn them against unworthy views and practices indulged in because they had an idea that Christ would return very soon. The letter was written from Corinth about 52. The statement appended in the usual editions that it was written from Athens is incorrect. Acts xviii: 1-5 show that it was at Corinth, after he had left Athens, for it was after Silas and Timothy had joined him.

The Second Epistle to The Thessalonians soon followed the first, probably in the same year, or the next. It seemed necessary to warn his fellow-Christians against the idea that the second coming of the Lord was near at hand. Possibly Paul had the usual misconception on this subject at first; but he soon saw that the expectation was not to be unduly cherished, hence this second letter emphasized the warning against any false hopes regarding it. The second epistle has even stronger Pauline characteristics than the first. The description of the Man of sin led it to be much quoted by the early fathers. There has been much discussion of the second chapter, and

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an attempt to show that it is unlike Paul. But Dean Alford insists that it "will be found on comparison to bear, in style and flow of sentences, a close resemblance to the denunciatory and prophetic portions of the other epistles." It is suggestive that in Paul's later epistles, and those most fully elaborated, as *Romans*, he has very little to say about the second advent. Its importance as to time had taken a secondary place in his appreciation of truth.

The Epistle to The Galatians is one of four whose Pauline authorship has been practically undisputed in the realm of scholarship. The others are the two letters to the Corinthians and that to the Romans. It is generally believed that this letter was written at Ephesus. A mischievous movement had developed in the Galatian Church which had loosened their hold upon the fundamental truth that faith in Christ is the only and sufficient ground for justification before God, so that they were casting about for other supplementary means of obtaining justification. And these means were certain observances of parts of the ceremonial law. Paul combats this error holding up Christ as the all-sufficient Saviour, and refers to the misguided conduct of Peter at Antioch to emphasize his point. It would seem the Judaic tendency had been fostered by some who were opposed to Paul and who threw suspicion upon his apostolic authority, for he insists upon his place as an apostle with

persistent demand. The cast of thought and language in the epistle has a strong affinity to that in the letters to the Corinthians and Romans, which we shall proceed to consider.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians was probably written soon after that to the Galatians. Paul had intended to sail from Ephesus to Corinth, thence to visit Macedonia, returning to Corinth on his way to Jerusalem. The news from Corinth changed his plan. He had written them a letter, now lost, and had told them of this plan, and when he changed it, they accused him of insincerity (2 Cor. i:17). But the change was due to the reports.

Aside from the unchristian conduct of the disciples, there were some serious perplexities among them, such as questions of marriage and celibacy, of eating meats offered to idols, of the appearance of women in the churches, of the value of spiritual gifts, and material difficulties about the resurrection. They had written Paul about these matters, but had said practically nothing about the unholy living of certain among them. Paul deals with all the conditions in his most vigorous spirit, revealing a splendid self control, and rising at times to sublime heights as in the thirteenth and fifteenth chapters, as he pictures the spirit of divine love and treats of the victory of the resurrection.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians is a sequel to the first. He had hurried to Mace-

donia, apparently being compelled to flee from Ephesus, and amid great hardships had reached Philippi, where he met Titus, whose good tidings filled Paul with joy. In this epistle the great apostle opens his inmost heart as nowhere else. The joy felt at first was soon changed to sorrow as Titus reported the aspersions cast upon Paul by some of the Corinthians. It almost breaks his heart, and he pours out his soul in protest and in defense of his loyalty to them and to his Lord. In this we find its striking contrast to the first epistle explained. That epistle is most systematic in its progress of thought, while this is perhaps the least systematic of all Paul's letters. It is the most emotional. Yet he weaves consolation with tribulation in a way to bring immense comfort to the struggling heart and the afflicted Church of all time.

At the end of the ninth chapter the tone of the letter changes so suddenly, from tenderness to a spirit of indignation, that it is most startling. Some have felt it must be a separate letter thus added. But it would appear probable, as one reads, that as Paul wrote, Titus continued his reports, and these reports caused the changes of feeling in the apostle's mind. Such sudden changes of style are found elsewhere, as in the speech of Elijah at Carmel. It is all, however, recognized as the letter of Paul.

The Epistle to The Romans is the fourth of this group. Its authenticity is undisputed, ex-

cept that Bauer questions the last two chapters as being from Paul. Dr. McGiffert holds that the epistle naturally ends with the fifteenth chapter, and that the sixteenth was probably added at a later time. He considers it Pauline, but probably a part of a letter to the Ephesians. Of these points we will speak in a moment. The epistle is generally recognized as having been written from Corinth about the year 58. References in the Acts and other epistles furnish the data for this conclusion. Paul had long been intending to visit Rome, and prepared this long and carefully elaborated letter to open the way for his coming.

The character of the letter is probably explained by certain facts regarding the Church at Rome. It had not been founded by Paul, and the data are insufficient to justify a conclusion regarding its beginning. Much discussion has been had as to whether it was mainly a Jewish or a Gentile church. Paul's letter would seem to indicate the latter, judging from the discussion of chapters ix-xi. Probably there were Jewish converts among them, and we note that Paul followed his custom when he arrived at Rome of going to the chief among the Jews first. Enough had been known of Christianity in Rome to allow Paul to base his argument on a foundation of Jewish thought and history, but much of the letter is intended to reveal the point of view of the whole human race. The tone of the letter

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is not especially polemical, and does not seem to have been directed against any false doctrine, or any special condition in Rome. It seems to be a careful statement of the writer's view of the general truth regarding the meaning of the Gospel in its relations to the Law, to prophecy, and to the universal needs of mankind. Chapters ix-xi do not seem to discuss the Jews in a controversial spirit, but to relate this feature of his subject to the whole in its proper light. Perhaps the thought that at the world's metropolis a somewhat full and elaborate statement of the fundamental truths of Christianity would be desirable had prompted the letter.

As to the discussion regarding the last two chapters, it may be said that early copies of the epistle existed without them. Origen attributes the omission to Marcion, who for his own purposes mutilated the epistle. The fact that the fathers do not quote from chapters xv and xvi is readily explained by the ending of the apostle's argument with the fourteenth chapter. The salutations and practical suggestions contained in these chapters would not be so likely to have place in the discussions of the patristic time. It is true, as Dr. McGiffert says, that the fifteenth chapter has a natural ending; but Paul's frequent postscripts are most characteristic, and the real doxology at the end of the sixteenth chapter fills out the letter as no other ending does. Dr. McGiffert argues that the extraordinary number of

personal greetings is scarcely consistent with the fact that Paul had never been in Rome, and the argument has force; and yet it is by no means impossible that these friends whom Paul knew in various places had settled in the capital city. It may be that some fragment of another letter has been interpolated here, bearing the marks of Paul in its contents, but the subject can only be one of conjecture, and has no vital importance in its bearing upon the value of the epistle as the great apostle's doctrinal statement of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Passing thus rapidly from the accepted epistles of Paul, we turn to consider a group of four letters which are generally assigned to the time of the apostle's first stay in Rome. They are the letters to the Colossians, Philippians, Ephesians and Philemon. Probably the first of these was *The Epistle to The Colossians*. With it must be associated the brief *Letter to Philemon*, which was written at the same time. The Church at Colossæ was meeting in the house of Philemon at the time, and the general and personal letters reveal traces of related thought. It would seem probable that Philemon had visited Ephesus when Paul resided there, and had become a Christian. The Christian worker who had laboured at Colossæ was Epaphrus, who had visited Paul at Rome, and was the bearer of news concerning the Colossian and Ephesian churches.

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There are those who urge that these letters were written at Cæsarea, but we need not take time to dwell upon the subject, as the generally accepted opinion fixes the place as Rome. Onesimus, the runaway slave of Philemon, had come under Paul's influence and confessed Christ. Paul sent him back to Philemon with a personal note, in which a beautiful Gospel of emancipation is set forth to all succeeding generations. Paul pleads for Onesimus as being no longer a mere slave, but now a "brother beloved" in Christ. The general epistle to the Colossians is coloured with the thought arising from this incident. Their spiritual deliverance from the slavery of sin, their reconciliation with God who "were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind," and the fact that in Christ there "is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free," all take on meaning as the apostle urges them to "be forgiving, long-suffering, even as Christ forgave" them. At last he mentions Tychicus "with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother who was one of you." The personal letter to Philemon is the only specimen of Paul's private correspondence preserved to us.

The Epistle to The Colossians has given rise to much discussion, because of the "Colossian heresy" presented by the "false teachers" who had come among them. There are wide differences of opinion as to what this heresy was. It would seem to have been a sort of philosophy,

Judaistic in some of its features, involving the worship of angels, inculcating ascetic rules, inspired by a false idea about the sinfulness of the flesh, and, most serious of all, limiting the recognition of Christ's authority and the sufficiency of His redemption. We need not trace at this time the sources of this heresy. Suffice it to say that it does not seem to have secured a great hold upon the Colossians for Paul does not appeal to them to return to their faith, but to hold fast to it in view of this dangerous teaching. By pointing out its errors he hopes to keep them from yielding to its power.

Speaking of the authenticity of the epistle, Dr. McGiffert, says: "The argument against its genuineness drawn from its language and style, has no weight. While there are undoubtedly linguistic and stylistic peculiarities in the epistle, the most noticeable of them can be explained from the subject-matter, and from the polemic use by Paul of the terminology of those whose teachings he is refuting; and the marks of identity with his acknowledged works, especially with the Epistle to the Philippians, which was written at about the same time, are far more numerous and striking. But the Christology of the epistle has long been a stumbling-block and has led many scholars to deny that Paul can be its author. But when the purpose of the epistle is kept clearly in mind, when it is realized that the author's object was not to teach Christology,

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but to emphasize the completeness of Christ's redemptive work, in order to show the groundlessness of the observances and practices recommended in Colossæ (by the false teachers), the difficulties vanish. Thus the striking assertion that in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, which goes beyond numerous utterances in Paul's writings only in form and emphasis, finds its explanation, as the context shows, in his desire to bring out the fact that the man who is in Christ has full redemption and does not need to seek fulness and perfectness in ritual observance and ascetic practice." It is not conceivable that anyone else could have imitated Paul so perfectly as this letter does. Its external and internal evidence is overwhelming in favour of the accepted view that it is from his pen.

The Epistle to The Ephesians is supposed to have been written probably immediately after that to the Colossians, as there is much resemblance between them. Dr. McGiffert says: "Some who ascribe Colossians to Paul are unable to admit that he wrote Ephesians. There can be no doubt that the difficulties which beset the latter are greater than those which attach to the former, and that the marks of Paul's own hand are fewer and less distinct. But when the authenticity of the one has been admitted, the principal arguments against the genuineness of the other are deprived of their force. . . . Moreover, the

resemblances between Colossians and Ephesians, both in style and in matter, are much easier to explain on the assumption that they were written by the same man at about the same time, than on the assumption that the author of the latter copied from the former. Many of the ideas, words and phrases are the same in both, but there is nowhere a trace of slavish or mechanical reproduction."

The objections may be summarized briefly thus: (1) Paul would not be likely to repeat himself so fully as Ephesians repeats Colossians. (2) Such expressions as "after I heard of your faith" in i, 15, indicate that the writer had never been in Ephesus. (3) There are no salutations to the Church at Ephesus, as we would certainly expect of Paul. (4) The Ephesian church contained both Jews and Gentiles, but this letter is apparently to Gentiles only. (5) Many items in style, sentiment and aim are not Pauline. To all this it may be said the objectors create more difficulties than they solve by their theory, that any one else than Paul was the author of the letter. The claim of De Wette that the author passed it off as Pauline proves that it cannot contain anything plainly un-Pauline. While there is much in common with Colossians, there is more distinctive in Ephesians itself. As to the expression about his "hearing" of them, the same is used in Philemon, and simply goes

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back in thought to the time when Paul had not yet known them, or refers to the reports recently received.

We would expect the salutations ordinarily, yet they do not always occur in the way of personal greetings. Since the Jews in Ephesus opposed Paul, it is not strange that he wrote more especially to the Gentiles. Moreover there are those who think the letter was a general letter to the churches in the region of Ephesus, and not to that one church. The people in the region were preponderatingly Gentile. The main argument is regarding the doctrine. In answer to this Dr. McGiffert says: "Here again, as in Colossians, the advance upon Paul's other writings is almost wholly in the matter of emphasis, and when the practical purpose of the epistle is taken into account, the difference makes no insuperable difficulty." Paul's design in this letter is a general one—to confirm and inspire the churches. The atmosphere of the letter is serene and hopeful. The appeal is to strive for a realization of the very highest Christian character in the fulness of Christ.

The Epistle to The Philippians is the last of this group. It is placed by some before, by others after the three just considered. Bishop Lightfoot, to whom the students of these epistles is greatly indebted, places this letter very early in the first Roman imprisonment. He points out several resemblances to the Epistle to the Romans,

and argues that these indicate an early date. On the other hand a rather striking resemblance between Phil. i, 23-30, and 2 Tim. iv, 6-8, indicate a date as late as possible for this letter. It is a matter which cannot be settled, and not of great importance. There is practically no serious objection to the authenticity of the epistle. It is a personal letter of a friend to Christian friends. They have given Paul much joy. There is one bad tendency in their midst which he rebukes, namely an indication of disunion. He implores them to be of one mind, and presents the familiar doctrines, inspiring appeals, and practical lessons in a most loving spirit.

The Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus complete the letters of Paul. Their authenticity has been widely questioned. Eusebius brings very important testimony when he speaks of "the fourteen epistles of Paul," although he makes some reservation about the epistle to the Hebrews. Dr. McGiffert thinks, "there is grave reason to doubt whether they are actually Paul's." He notes that they are not included in the writings of Paul by any writer prior to Irenæus. They are the only letters bearing the name of Paul not appearing in the New Testament of Marcion. The tone employed in addressing Timothy and Titus is not what he would expect of Paul. "They had been for many years beloved and trusted disciples and intimate friends and companions, and yet Paul finds it necessary

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to emphasize his apostleship, to defend his character and authority, to assert that he is not lying, as if he were addressing strangers or even enemies such as he had to deal with in Galatia and Corinth." It is further urged that the contents have many instructions in the elementary duties of the Christian life, warnings against vice and lust, as if the writer thought Timothy and Titus needed these.

Moreover it is claimed that while there are resemblances to Paul's epistles, there are so many features not repeated in Paul as to suggest another writer. One table shows one hundred and sixty-five words found only in these three epistles. Dr. McGiffert further says: "Though we cannot, with many critics, draw a conclusion adverse to Pauline authorship from the existence of such heresies as we find alluded to, we are compelled to see in the way they are handled by the author a convincing proof that he was not Paul. . . . Whether the false teachers are antinomian or ascetic, whether they are spiritualistic or legalistic, the author does not treat them as if there were any vital difference between them. They are all alike given to foolish and ignorant questionings, disputes about words, strifes about the law, fables, genealogies, and profane babblings. Such indiscriminate denunciations are certainly not what we should expect from a man like Paul, who was an uncommonly clear-headed dialectician, accustomed to draw

fine distinctions, and whose penetration and ability to discover and display the vital point of difference between himself and an antagonist have never been surpassed.

“Those who ascribe to Paul the references to false teaching which occur in the pastoral epistles do him a serious injustice. . . . Instead of demonstrating the falseness of the positions taken by the heretical teachers, he simply denounces them; and instead of exhibiting his own Gospel, and showing its bearing on the questions in dispute, he simply appeals to the fact that a deposit of faith has been handed down as a safeguard against all heresies of whatever sort. The contrast between this kind of procedure and that which Paul follows in Galatians, Romans, and Colossians, in all the epistles, in fact, in which he has to deal with heresy, is most striking. The spirit that actuates the pastorals is not the spirit of Paul, but the spirit of 2 John, and of Polycarp.” This is trenchant and vigorous argument.

On the other hand the arguments are given for the Pauline authorship. The Muratorian Canon (about 170) includes thirteen epistles of Paul, excluding Hebrews, and they have held their place in all the Canons East and West. Prior to Irenæus, both Clement of Rome and Polycarp use expressions which are identical with certain phrases in Titus, and 2 Timothy. On the face of them the letters claim to be Paul's. One who was

attempting to imitate Paul would not have been so free to use words and phrases so original as many which occur. The very fact which Dr. McGiffert urges so earnestly, that Paul does not reveal his usual argumentative and logical acumen here, is in perfect harmony with a letter to one who was his "own son in faith." Paul's references to himself bear all the naturalness of a personal testimony. The whole atmosphere of the letters is saturated with a Pauline flavour, not the keen analytical method of the longer epistles, written to combat error, but in harmony with a general treatise.

As the reader follows the thought, it becomes apparent that what Dr. McGiffert deems a lack of confidence in his companions in the faith, leading him to warnings against vices not likely to be dangerous to them, is only a high aspiration for them that they may be free from all these things, to which all men are liable, and to which men of that day and environment were continually exposed. Long lists of resemblances between the expressions in these epistles and others accepted as Paul's are given. Dr. McGiffert would class these letters with the writings of Polycarp, but the difference of tone, of divine glow, of intellectual power, is immense. Dr. P. J. Gloag says: "The combination of mental vigour and sober, practical good sense, and sagacious intuition with regard to men and things, and extensive knowledge, with fervent

zeal, and enthusiasm of temperament, and ardent piety, and entire self-sacrifice, and heavenly-mindedness, and the upward, onward movement of the whole inner man under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, producing an inartistic eloquence of immense force and persuasiveness, is found in these pastoral epistles, as in all the other epistles of the great apostle; but it is found nowhere else. St. Paul, we know, could have written them, we know of no one else who could."

XXV

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

THE importance of this portion of the New Testament has not been adequately emphasized. For several reasons it holds a place of unique character among the epistles which came from the apostles. Its distinctive significance lies in the fact that it comes from the second generation of the apostolic age, in the last quarter of the first century, and while that may be true of John's Gospel, yet this writer does not carry the personal memory which appears in John, and reflects for us the real balance of the truth as it came to be understood by the Church which followed the earlier beginnings. The different points of view and of emphasis, as suggested in different epistles and records, were coming to be related in their proper proportions, and we have here a statement of the whole truth, both as it related the Old Testament with the New, and the life and teachings of Christ with the illumination of the teachings of the apostles.

The Epistle to the Hebrews does this for us as does no other section of the New Testament. The title which appears in our versions, including both the name of Paul and the words "To the He-

brews" is not found in the early manuscripts. The words "To the Hebrews" are generally found, and yet the epistle itself does not specify any such class, nor give any hint of the writer. In iii: 1, the writer addresses his readers as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," and there is really no specific intimation that he has in mind a special class of Christians. The whole scope of the thought suggests a much broader purpose.

It was a time of persecution. His readers are reminded of "the former days," when they were first "illuminated," and of persecution endured in the past. Sufficient time had elapsed to allow them to show signs of wavering from their early steadfastness, and their "leaders" who had "spoken to them the word of God," had already passed away, the reference to them (xiii: 7) suggesting martyrdom as the form of their death. Nothing can be urged as to date because no reference is made to the destruction of Jerusalem, for it is a very interesting fact that no mention at all is made of the Temple. It is the Tabernacle to which the writer refers throughout in all his comparisons and contrasts. It is the camp in the wilderness and Moses, the giver of the law, with which he deals. The letter is written to a certain church or community of churches, as evidenced in xiii: 22-23; but we have no data to indicate who they were. The expression "they of Italy" may mean that the letter was written from

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Italy, or that some from Italy were sojourning with the writer at the time. Probably the letter was written about the year 80.

Various theories about the authorship have been urged. The earliest allusion to this matter is by Clement of Alexandria, who sets forth the opinion that Paul wrote it first in Hebrew, and Luke translated it into Greek. But it is very evident that the whole letter has the unmistakable ring of an original composition, and this view of Clement is untenable. Another view, apparently held by Jerome, was that Paul supplied the ideas which another person put into their present form. Tertullian puts forth the suggestion that Barnabas wrote it. All this shows that the early fathers realized that the epistle bears indications that it did not come from the pen of Paul. And yet it has similarities to Paul's thought and style, and soon came to be attributed to him, until modern scholarship realized that the evidence is conclusive against Pauline authorship. Luther suggested Apollos as being the probable author.

The fact remains that we do not know the author. Concerning this Dr. McGiffert says:—"Though religiously and in vigour and force of personality, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was inferior to the great apostle to the Gentiles, he was without doubt the finest and most cultured literary genius of the primitive church. His thought moves throughout on an

elevated plane, and his language is uniformly worthy of his thought, in certain passages becoming genuinely eloquent and even sublime. The fact that a writer of such rare power and grace should have left us only a single monument of his genius, and that a mere letter, written for a definite practical purpose, and that his name should have been entirely forgotten within less than a century after his death, serves to remind us in a very forcible way of the limitations of our knowledge respecting the early days of Christianity. . . . In that age names meant nothing; literature meant still less. The Spirit of God speaking in and through believers was everything. . . . Subsequent generations retained for the most part only what was supposed to be apostolic, and only because it was. And all those who could not lay claim to the dignity of apostles passed into oblivion, and the few brief and scattered products of their pens which have survived the ravages of time, owe their preservation to the fact that they were fortunate enough to lose their identity and to get themselves attached in one way or another to some apostolic name."

As has been intimated, the epistle reveals a purpose to include Christians generally, and not simply Jews, in its teachings and appeals. The use of Old Testament material was common to the whole Church which looked upon these Scriptures as the only authoritative writings at the first. It belonged to Gentile and Jew alike, as all

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were "children of faithful Abraham." Dr. McGiffert notes that "in the practical exhortations and warnings with which the epistle is filled, and which reveal most clearly the real aim it was written for, nothing whatever is said about apostasy to Judaism. The readers are never warned against falling back into the religion of Moses, although if that is what the author feared, it would seem that he could hardly have failed, when he contrasted the new covenant with the old, to call direct attention to the folly of deserting the one for the other. But instead of doing that, he draws lessons of an entirely different kind: 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' 'Take heed lest there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief.' 'Let us draw near with boldness that we may receive mercy.' 'Be not sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.' And when the author warns his readers against the worst of all sins,—the wilful denial and repudiation of Christ, after once accepting him—there is no sign that he thinks of such apostasy as due to the influence of Judaism, or as connected with it in any way." Not only is this true, but there are some passages which suggest Gentiles as the object of the writer's thought: "How much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" This points to Christians who had come out of heathenism. In most

of Paul's fields the disciples were thought of, not as Jews or Gentiles, but as Christians. And this general thought of the believers to whom this letter is sent is entirely consistent with the whole tone of it.

Without presenting a detailed analysis of the epistle, it may be important to show how the author clearly reveals a difference in his conceptions from those which characterize the writings of Paul, although there is a sympathy with the Pauline thought in much of it. It is apparent that the author looks upon salvation as largely a future blessing, for which the faithful are to endure unto the end. Paul's dominant idea is that salvation is a freedom from the flesh here and now increasingly, with the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us and transforming the character. The author agrees with Paul that the old covenant is abrogated; but he finds the reason for this to be, not because of a radical difference, but because the old was an imperfect shadow of that which is to be perfectly realized in the new. Moreover in realizing the aim of the new covenant, the author finds a larger place for the life of Christ than is often given. The importance of His death is not minimized, but the fact that "when He came into the world, He said, Lo! I come to do Thy will, O God," points to an appreciation of the obedience which He rendered to the Father, in the fulfilling of all righteousness, which gave value to His death as the spotless Lamb of God.

Again this epistle, while assuming the resurrection, passes by that fact, which has such large place in Paul's thought, and dwells upon the work of Christ now as our Advocate at the throne of God. In the exercise of His high-priestly office, this part of Christ's mediation still goes on, which it is vitally important that His people should realize. In all this, the author puts into the priestly duty the work of sanctifying His followers. This is very important, because it was not a part of the duty of the Jewish priest. What Christ is now doing in heaven for us is His supreme work, and we not only have forgiveness of sins because of His finished work when He was in the flesh, and died on the cross; but we have His continued help in our sanctification through His Spirit. All the story of the earthly experience is made to reveal the purpose of Christ to become fitted for this work, as when we read in ii: 17-18: "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Perhaps this contribution is the most distinctive in the epistle, and its sympathy with Paul's teaching is at once in keeping with its different emphasis from that which dominated Paul's attitude toward Christ.

Before turning from this epistle, it is important to note how it contributes a special emphasis upon the historic Moses and the historic Tabernacle. It may be said, of course, that all this discussion of the historic fundamentals of the Mosaic law and ceremony was simply the taking from the record that which was in its present form when the author prepared his letter, and that he simply used the records without in any way adding anything to the evidence for historicity of the accounts of Moses and the features of the system discussed. But when we read: "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his own house," we feel a sense of reliability which reminds us that at the time of the apostles the universal conviction of the reality of the establishment of the theocracy, as the record indicates, strengthens the ground for believing the national faith was not built upon a fiction which was foisted in any way upon the people, but upon a fact whose actual character was the basis of all prophetic utterance and all requirement on the part of the Christian leaders as well. The epistle to the Hebrews is a strong confirmation of the faith of the people in the historic Moses, with his work in the Camp and Tabernacle at the beginning of Israel's national life.

XXVI

THE WRITINGS OF JOHN

THE writings which tradition has attributed to John the beloved disciple, are the three letters which bear his name, the Book of Revelation and the Fourth Gospel. It is generally conceded that the first of the epistles and the Fourth Gospel are written by the same man. As to the other writings there is great divergence of view. Dr. McGiffert's statement regarding the two short letters sums up the subject for us thus: "The two brief epistles known as Second and Third John were written by one hand, and at about the same time. Whether they, too, are by the author of the Gospel and of the First Epistle of John is not certain. The use of the term 'elder' in the opening salutation is against the identification, as are also certain differences in style. But on the other hand there are striking resemblances both in thought and in language which naturally suggest, and indeed make it quite probable, that the author was the same in both cases. Tradition does not help us in the matter, for it begins very late, and even then is not unanimous. Some of the fathers ascribe the letters to the apostle John, others to

John the presbyter, others are in doubt as to their authorship. But at any rate, even if not identical with the author of the first epistle the writer of the two short epistles must have belonged to the same school and breathed the same atmosphere, and must have been familiar with the Johanine literature."

This statement practically leaves no opposition to the strong claims that are made for the identity of authorship by many scholars. It is urged that the first and second epistles reveal the same hand by fully as much evidence as could be demanded. The strongly marked style of the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle is also conspicuous in the Second Epistle and is not lacking, though not quite so conspicuous, in the third. The two great characteristics of this style are profound thought and simplicity of language. The key to the subject, therefore, is to be found in the solution of the problem of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. The most satisfactory recent discussion of this subject is by Dr. Marcus Dods, in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*. Dr. Dods emphasizes the importance of this inquiry because "in no other Gospel have we the direct testimony of an eye-witness. Luke expressly informs us that his information, although carefully sifted, is at second hand. . . . But the Fourth Gospel professes to be the work of an eye-witness, and of an eye-witness who enjoyed an intimacy with our Lord, allowed to none besides. . . . The au-

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thor of the Gospel not only expresses his own belief in our Lord's divinity, but he puts words into the mouth of Jesus, which even on close scrutiny seem to many to form an explicit claim to preexistence and thus to imply a claim to divinity. . . . If an apostle was responsible for the Gospel, then the probability is that the utterances which are referred to Christ nearly, if not absolutely, represent His very words, and that the doctrinal position of the author himself is not one we can lightly set aside."

Dr. Dods, in noting the external evidence of Johanine authorship, begins with the statement that at the end of the second century this Gospel was accepted as the work of the apostle John, and was recognized as canonical. The opponents of Johanine authorship have declared it "totally unnecessary" to account for this very important fact, but Dr. Dods insists that the fact cannot thus be dismissed easily. He quotes with approval the statement of Archdeacon Watkins concerning the fathers of the time "that these individual witnesses were men of culture and rich mental endowment, with full access to materials for judgment, and full power to exercise that judgment; that their witness was given in the face of hostile heathenism and opposing heresy, which demanded caution in argument and reserve in statement; and that this witness is clear, definite, unquestioned."

There was only one prominent exception to this

universal recognition in the person of Marcion. But it is pointed out that the fact that Marcion rejected John's Gospel, which was on doctrinal grounds, and not a denial that John wrote it, not only shows that it had been accepted before his day (170), but also that in spite of the opposition of Marcion, the fathers maintained their view. Irenæus (180) accepted it as John's, and the significance of this is the fact that Irenæus was the pupil of Polycarp, who was the disciple of John. About the year 150 Tatian published a Harmony of the four Gospels, and Prof. Sanday shows that the text used in this work of Tatian "does not represent the original autograph of the Gospel, nor a first copy of it, but that several copyings must have intervened between the original and Tatian's text." Dr. Sanday asserts that, so far as he knows, the German critics have overlooked this important fact.

Coming to an earlier date, we note that the one extant writing of Polycarp, written about 110, quotes from the First Epistle of John, and since no one doubts that it came from the same hand as the Gospel, we must fix the time of his activity before 110. Ezra Abbott points out the fact that the Gnostics accepted the Gospel as John's about the year 120, which means that "they received it because they could not help it. They would not have admitted the authority of a book which could only be reconciled with their doctrines by most forced

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interpretation, if they could have destroyed its authority by denying its genuineness. Its genuineness could then be easily ascertained. . . . The fact of the reception of the Fourth Gospel as his work at so early a date, by parties so violently opposed to each other, proves that the evidence of its genuineness was decisive."

Turning to the internal evidence, Dr. Dods follows the usual items considered by scholars, showing that the writer was (1) a Jew, (2) a Palestinian, (3) an eye-witness, (4) the apostle John. The first three of these points need not occupy our time, for they are generally conceded. These do not, however, in some minds lead to the fourth point. In xxi: 24, the writer of this Gospel is identified with the disciple whom Jesus loved. In the other Gospels John is frequently mentioned by name. In this Gospel he is not mentioned by name, and the most natural and sufficient explanation of this fact is that John was its author. But it is objected that this Gospel (1) has a universalism not consistent with what we know of John as a pillar in the Jewish church. But if the long years intervening before John wrote had not broadened his thought, it would be strange indeed. We find just what we would expect in this regard. (2) There is a philosophical colouring not likely to be found in the writing of a Galilean fisherman. This again presumes that the youth John had made no progress through sixty years of growth and study. At

best the traces of a philosophy in John have been exaggerated. Doubtless at Ephesus he came into contact with some of it, but the Logos idea is not so much philosophical, as it is the essential expression of Sonship. Harnack truly says: "The prologue is not the key to the understanding of the Gospel, but is rather intended to prepare the Hellenistic reader for its perusal." After the introduction, the Logos is not referred to again.

(3) It is claimed that John depends upon the Synoptics for material, and has not the originality of an eye-witness. But no one would deny that John knew the Synoptics, and it would be perfectly natural for him to use certain familiar phrases, especially as some of the expressions must have been the exact statements of fact, such as he would repeat with precision. Even when they are used there are marks of change in the connections which suggest an original witness. Dr. Dods shows that "it may rather be said that, in several instances, we find additions and corrections which are requisite for the understanding of the Synoptists. From the first three Gospels the reader might gather that our Lord's ministry extended over only one year. The Fourth Gospel definitely mentions three Passovers, with a possible fourth (ii: 13, vi: 4, xiii: 1, and v: 1)."

The independence of the Fourth Gospel is further shown by the fact that much is introduced not found in the three Synoptics. The account of the semi-public ministry previous to the death

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of the Baptist, the omission of much which the others contain, as unnecessary, and the introduction of much not found in them, as important supplementary material, all show that the writer had knowledge beyond the records already possessed. This is explained by certain critics as pointing to some of John's followers. But since our external evidence goes to a point within twenty years of John, there remains no reason for refusing to admit the apostle himself as the authority for these statements of fact, and his illuminating comments upon them.

(4) Perhaps one of the most serious difficulties in the mind of many critics is the presence in this Gospel of so many lengthy addresses and conversations not mentioned in the other Gospels. Renan puts the objection strongly: "This fashion of preaching and demonstrating without ceasing, this everlasting argumentation, this artificial get-up, these long discussions following each miracle, these discourses, stiff and awkward, whose tone is so often false and unequal, are intolerable to a man of taste alongside the delicious sentences of the Synoptists." In facing this consideration, Dr. Dods says:—"The narrative portion of John may be said to exist for the sake of the verbal teaching. The miracles which in the first three Gospels appear as the beneficent acts of our Lord without ulterior motive, seem in the Fourth Gospel to exist for the sake of the teaching they

embody, and the discussions they give rise to. Similarly, the persons introduced, such as Nicodemus, are viewed chiefly as instrumental in eliciting from Jesus certain sayings, and are themselves forgotten in the conversation they have suggested."

Coming to the real explanation, Dr. Dods continues: "If John had had nothing new to tell, no fresh aspect of Christ or His teaching to present, he would not have written at all. No doubt each of the Synoptists goes over ground already traversed by his fellow-Synoptist, but it has yet to be proved that they knew one another's work. John did know of their Gospels, and the very fact that he added a fourth prepares us to expect that it will be different. . . . That there was another aspect essential to the completeness of the figure was, as the present Bishop of Derry has pointed out, also to be surmised. . . . The faith which has found its resting place in the Christ of the Synoptists is not unsettled or perplexed by anything it finds in John. They are not two Christs but one, which the four Gospels depict: diverse as the profile and front face, but one another's complement rather than contradiction."

It is not claimed that all that is recorded in this Gospel was spoken exactly as it stands. All critics agree that John must necessarily have condensed conversations and discourses. Probably we have the actual words of the most striking

sayings, for they could not be forgotten. And this especially applies to the sayings of Christ regarding Himself. "No doubt," says Dr. Dods, "in the last resort we must trust John. But whom could we more reasonably trust?" Moreover when we note the author's statement regarding his object in writing this Gospel, (xx: 31) "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in His name," it becomes evident that he is not purposing to write a full biography of Jesus, but to select such material from the store as will most readily accomplish his aim. His reference to the fact that if he were to tell all that Jesus said and did, there would not be books enough to hold it, only strengthens the sense of the personal touch of the eye-witness in the story.

It is evident that John realized that this truth needed confirmation, that there existed a tendency to deny the Messiahship of Jesus. We know this tendency was in the air at the end of the first century in certain quarters. Dr. Dods utters strong words just at this point: "The object in view reflects light on the historicity of the contents of the Gospel. The writer professes to produce certain facts which have powerfully influenced the minds of men, and have produced faith. If these pretended facts were fictions, then the writer is dishonest and beneath contempt. He wishes to produce the conviction that Jesus is the Messiah,

and to accomplish this purpose invents incidents and manipulates utterances of Jesus. A writer of romance who merely wishes to please, even a preacher whose aim is edification, might claim a certain latitude or negligence of accuracy, but a writer whose object is to prove a certain proposition stands on a very different platform, and can only be pronounced fraudulent if he invents his evidence." The reader will appreciate the force of these words as applied to certain theories of authorship already considered in the discussion of certain Old Testament books. The argument applies there as here.

Concerning John's method to convince his readers that Jesus is the Son of God, Dr. Dods says it is the simplest possible. "He does not expect that men will believe this on his mere word. He sets himself to reproduce those salient features in the life of Jesus which chiefly manifested His Messianic dignity and function. He believes that what convinced himself will convince others. One by one he cites his witnesses, never garbling their testimony nor concealing the adverse testimony, but showing with as exact truthfulness how unbelief grew and hardened into opposition, as he tells how the faith grew till it culminated in the supreme confession of Thomas, 'My Lord and my God.' The plan of the Gospel is therefore the simplest. It falls into two parts. In the first, John presents those scenes in which Jesus made those self-revelations which it was essential

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the world should see. In the second part the glory of Christ is manifested, culminating in His triumph over death."

To these words of Dr. Dods should be added the following statement of Dr. McGiffert: "The Gospel of John alone reveals fully the secret of Christ's marvellous power in His profound God-consciousness, and it is this that gives it its permanent historic as well as religious value. It constitutes an indispensable supplement of the Synoptic Gospels for the historian who would know not simply the actual words of Jesus and the course of His daily life, but the ultimate basis of His religious ideas and ideals, and thus the explanation of His controlling and abiding influence."

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The Hebrew custom of naming books by their initial words is followed here. And the word is descriptive of the largest part of the contents of the book. It is preeminently an apocalypse, suggesting the vision of Daniel. The book bears the name of John, and Justin Martyr identifies the author with the apostle. Later fathers questioned its apostolic authorship, and Eusebius reports that in his day many ascribed it to the presbyter John, of whom Papias tells us. It did not appear in some of the earliest collections of the New Testament, and was rather slow in finding its place in the Canon. It would seem, however,

that one principal reason for this was that the chiliasm of the book was offensive to some of the fathers, who were anxious to disprove its apostolic authorship on this account. Dr. McGiffert is very urgent in the opinion that the writer of the Apocalypse could not have been the author of the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John. He notes (1) that the author does not himself claim to be an apostle, and (2) that it represents in the main an entirely different type of thought.

Much turns upon the time when it is probable the book was written. The two dates advocated are 69 and 96. The reversed figures are easily remembered. The advocates of the earlier date fix John's banishment in the time of the Neronian persecution, and believe the Apocalypse preceded the Fourth Gospel by nearly thirty years. Canon Westcott, in the *Speaker's Commentary*, argues for the earlier date. He says (1) regarding the linguistic phenomena: "Nor is it difficult to see that, in any case, intercourse with a Greek-speaking people would in a short time naturally reduce the style of the author of the Apocalypse to that of the author of the Gospel. It is, however, very difficult to suppose that the language of the writer of the Gospel could pass at a later time, in a Greek-speaking country, into the language of the Apocalypse."

Dr. Westcott is recognized as one of the

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masters of the linguistic problems, and his judgment on this point is especially valuable. (2) Regarding the doctrinal expressions, he says: "The Apocalypse is doctrinally the uniting link between the Synoptists and the Fourth Gospel. It offers the characteristic thoughts of the Fourth Gospel in that form of development which belongs to the earliest apostolic age. It belongs to different historical circumstances, to a different phase of intellectual progress, to a different theological stage, from that of St. John's Gospel; and yet it is not only in harmony with it in its teachings, but in the order of thought it is the necessary germ out of which the Gospel proceeded by a process of life. . . . The Apocalypse is less developed both in thought and style. The material imagery in which it is composed includes the idea of progress in interpretation. The symbols are living. On the other hand, to go back from the teaching of the Gospel to that of the Apocalypse, to clothe clear thought in figures, to reduce the full expression of truth to its rudimentary beginnings, seems to involve a moral miracle which would introduce confusion into life."

This argument is not only in behalf of the earlier date, as is apparent, but also of the Johanne authorship. The principal explanation of the difference of opinion which has all along arisen about the matter is the fact that some of the fathers assert that John's banishment was in the

time of Domitian. Clement of Alexandria says that John went from the island of Patmos "after the tyrant was dead" to Ephesus, and that from Ephesus as his headquarters he used to go into the neighbouring districts to appoint bishops, to regulate churches, and to ordain clergy. But Irenæus says the Apocalypse was seen during the reign of Domitian. But Domitian did not die until 96, and it is not probable that John outlived the first century. Eusebius places the long stay of John in Ephesus after his return from Patmos, and this seems to be generally agreed upon; but if this be so, it seems likely that "the tyrant" was mistakenly supposed by Irenæus to be Domitian, and that Eusebius quoted him, following the mistake.

Tertullian in a famous passage about Rome says: "Where Peter suffered a death like our Lord's; where Paul was beheaded like John the Baptist; and where the Apostle John after being plunged into burning hot oil without being hurt, was banished to an island." The only point to this which is significant is that the association of John's persecution with that of Peter and Paul would point to the earlier persecution of Nero. Moreover Tertullian, in speaking of Domitian, says his was a milder persecution than that of Nero, and implies that he restored those he had banished, but no mention is made of John. While all this is not conclusive, it points to the earlier date for the Apoc-

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alypse, and also strengthens the opinion that it came from the pen of the Apostle. Dr. McGiffert argues that the strong hatred of the State as the enemy of the Church, revealed in the book, points to a later date, for this hatred did not exist earlier. But Paul's Roman citizenship gave him a different point of view of the State, and we can understand how the persecutions, whether early or late, would explain any Judaistic sense of the enmity between the kingdoms of the earth and the Kingdom of Heaven.

The book of Revelation has largely been a sealed book to the average man, notwithstanding the assertion that "blessed is he who reads these words of teaching and they also who hear and keep the things written therein." Victor Hugo, when he himself was an exile, said: "In reading the poem of Patmos some one seems to push you from behind." In their days of trial and persecution the disciples were looking for the return of their Lord. Jesus had spoken to them of the words of the prophet Daniel, and naturally they studied again the message of that prophet. John had evidently done this, for two of Daniel's great visions form the framework on which John's vision is built. The book deals with conditions and principles rather than with particular places and individuals. In allegory and symbol the vision of the victory of Christ and His redeemed is pictured with a sublime exaltation of sustained thought. "The things that are," the things then

current, are considered in the letters to the Seven Churches, in their relation to their Lord and to the world. "The things past" are unfolded from the sealed book and expressed in cryptic terms. The story of the past is the shadow of the "things that must be hereafter."

The divisions of the book are not chronological, but a series of pictures which present the same teaching from different points of view. "The lines between the sensible and the spiritual are absent. Neither time nor death separates Christ from His apostles and His Church." This is not the place to venture an interpretation of the book, but the writer wishes to call attention to a recent publication on the subject which bears the rather fantastic title *Mystery of The Golden Cloth* by the Rev. J. S. Hughes. It is the most satisfactory study of the Apocalypse, taken all in all, of which he knows. The writer is one of those who believe this book will take a more satisfactory place in the future thought of the Church than it has had heretofore. The day will come when the people of God will respond to the triumphant strain which sounds through it, assuring the ultimate victory and unending joy of the Lord of our salvation and His redeemed out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.

XXVII

THE PLACE OF MIRACLES

THE student of the movement of Criticism quickly discovers that the extreme critics deny the supernatural in every form. Statements in the text regarding divine revelations and miraculous manifestations are dismissed by them as fictitious and not worthy of credence. Moreover many Christian students are sympathetic with the idea that it would be a great gain to the cause of truth if less were made of the importance of miracles, and more stress laid upon the abiding verities of spiritual truth and righteous living. A discussion of this subject is therefore important as bearing upon the whole field of historic and literary Criticism, especially as it involves the naturalistic theories to which certain critics are so strongly wedded.

When we turn to consider the place of miracle in the Old Testament records, it is vitally essential that we keep in mind the actual condition of the masses of the people. They were ignorant and undisciplined. Only a very few could read, and the multitude was compelled to receive the truth from the lips of these few chosen men. The importance of this fact as related to the revelation

of truth is far-reaching. All revelation must be on the principle of accommodation to the limitations of the people to be instructed. Modern pedagogy has discovered the importance of the object lesson for the child. But Froebel might have learned his new appreciation of its value if he had studied the method of divine revelation to men.

There was no other method possible for the education of the people comparable to this. It was the kindergarten age of the world-school, and the method was by far the most effective possible. The translation of Enoch taught the truth of the immortality of the soul as nothing else could have done at the time. Its purpose was not apologetic so much as pedagogical. It was to illuminate the truth rather than to prove it. Moreover all the religions round about were characterized by manifestations of power by magicians and necromancers, and the conviction that Jehovah was possessed of power which surpassed that of these experts in the mysteries was vital to a compelling faith on the part of the chosen people.

This suggests the very important consideration of the real philosophy of miracle. Its purpose was to authenticate the messenger of Jehovah by such manifestation of power, in connection with his message, as convinced the people that Jehovah was a mightier God than their gods in whom they were trusting. Thus in the mis-

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sion of Moses the plagues in Egypt smote Egyptian gods one after another, until this one great truth convinced both Israel and Egypt that Jehovah's power was supreme. So in the test of Elijah at Mt. Carmel, the significance of the challenge was in the fact that Baal was the sun-god, and the test of fire would be final for him. Keeping this principle in mind, let us consider the book of Jonah, so much discussed in connection with this subject. If we consider the reference to Jonah as the son of Amittai as identifying the prophet with that Jonah who prophesied in the time of Jeroboam II., then we are in the great miracle period of Elijah and Elisha. The fact is emphasized by Rawlinson and others that at this time the principal god of Nineveh was Dagon the fish-god, whose image appeared three times as frequently as that of any other god.

If the philosophy of miracle is to be consistently maintained, then in connection with Jonah's mission to Nineveh some manifestation of Jehovah's power must involve the superiority of Israel's God over Dagon. The situation is even strengthened if you declare Jonah to be an allegory. If the writer of this parable created the story out of his imagination for the moral presented, then he so fully realized the philosophy of miracle as to see that he must present his prophet as authenticated in the same manner that other prophets were, and that a great fish must figure in the story in order that Jehovah should be proved su-

perior to Dagon to the people of Nineveh. Thus we are strengthened at either horn of the dilemma, for the purpose of the miracle is consistently maintained. It was God's way of teaching which was the most effective at the time, and therefore the best possible way.

When we approach the New Testament, we find our Lord defining the place and limitations of the miracle, as in his words to Philip, in John xiv: 10-11, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works sake." Then again in His words to Thomas in John xx: 29, "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen me, and yet have believed." Here we find a real value set upon the miracle as a help to faith; but a teaching that a better day would come when men would not need these objective helps, and would discern the spiritual truth for itself.

But let not those who may have reached this higher level of apprehension of the truth forget that the children of the kindergarten were not as far advanced. The transition was slowly making headway at the time of Christ, and He saw the better day; but the people were still to find help in the

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objective lesson, with its manifestation of power and illumination of truth. We recall what Dr. Dods said, that "the miracles which in the first three Gospels appear as the beneficent acts of our Lord without ulterior motive, seem in the Fourth Gospel to exist for the sake of the teaching they embody, and the discussions they give rise to." This suggests that John saw the real value of the miracle, as the Synoptists did not, and set it forth in its relation to truth as an illumination rather than an argument.

And yet it would be a great mistake to encourage the view that the presence of the miracle justifies the opinion that the record is unhistorical. Dr. Bruce discusses this subject vigorously in his introduction to the three synoptic Gospels. He says: "Those who count the miracle impossible are tempted to pronounce the record of the healing ministry of Christ unhistorical. This is not a scientific procedure. The question of fact should be dealt with separately on its own grounds, and the question of explicability taken up only in the second place. There are good reasons for believing that the healing ministry, miraculous or not miraculous, was a great fact in the public career of Jesus. Nine acts of healing, some of them very remarkable, are reported in all the synoptical Gospels. The healing element in the ministry is so interwoven with the didactic that the former cannot be eliminated

without destroying the whole story. This is frankly acknowledged by Harnack.

“Still more significant are the theories invented to explain away the power. . . . Men do not theorize about nothing. There were remarkable facts urgently demanding explanation of some sort. . . . It is not scientific to neglect the phenomena as unworthy of notice. As little is it scientific to make the solution easy by understatement of the facts to be explained. . . . Finally, it is not to be supposed that these healing acts, though indubitable facts, have no permanent religious value. Their use in the evidences of Christianity may belong to an antiquated type of apologetic, but in other respects their significance is perennial. Whether miraculous or not, they equally reveal the wide-hearted benevolence of Jesus. They throw a side light on His doctrine of God and man, and especially on His conception of the ideal of life. . . . Jesus had no sympathy with the hard antithesis between spirit and flesh.”

To this statement it will be fitting to add the words of Dr. Purves: “It does not appear possible to account for the rise and course of apostolic Christianity except by the recognition of the supernatural facts and forces to which the books themselves testify. The frank acknowledgment of the supernatural, together with

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the perception of the no less truly genetic way in which the original faith in Jesus as Messiah was unfolded and extended, would seem to be required of the historian who wishes to be faithful to his sources of information and to present apostolic Christianity as it was."

Yet the statement is frequently made by Christian scholars in our day that the miracle has lost its apologetic value. While we have recognized that it is not necessary for some people to-day in order to their perception of the truth; yet we have one of the most suggestive proofs that the statement is incorrect. The idea back of the statement, as urged by the anti-miracle advocates, is that it would not help faith to-day if the teaching were accompanied by the healing of the sick. But what is the secret of the wide-spread movement of so-called Christian Science but this very belief in healing power? The devotee of this new cult will insist that "the demonstration" is the final proof of the reasonableness of his faith. Thousands of intelligent men and women, of a much higher grade of cultivation than was known in Bible times, are thus testifying to the value of healing power in connection with a new teaching. Whatever explanation you may offer of this healing which is actually experienced in several of these cults of our time, the fact remains that the faith in the teaching is strengthened by the conviction that the healing power is somehow connected with the knowledge of the

truth. Human nature is a constant quality through the years.

But beyond this instance of current experience, it is important to emphasize the fact that the Evangelical faith of Christendom is based on the miracle of the resurrection of Christ. Back of that is the miracle of the incarnation. It is the truth of a divine Christ once incarnate and forever victorious, a living Saviour, which gives vitality to our faith. Christian life is not nourished by the memory of a dead man, but by the fellowship of a living God. Christ is something more than the greatest personality of the past; He is the greatest personality of the present. It is in that God-consciousness which breathes in His life, as pictured to us by John, that He speaks to men saying: "I lay down my life of myself. No man taketh it from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." The appreciation of His continuing work as our Advocate involves the faith in a mighty putting forth of divine power in His exaltation to the throne of God. This manifestation of power in all the history of God's dealing with men, from the beginning unto this hour, is the throbbing life-blood of that living faith in God and God's love for mankind which runs through all acceptance of revealed truth and all allegiance to the manifested Christ.

XXVIII

CHRIST AND THE CRITICS

WHAT position must we take concerning the authority of Christ as a teacher, in so far as His attitude toward the Old Testament writings involved the questions of criticism? There are two views held. On the one hand, the extreme critics have confidently urged that Christ had no concern about these questions, and when He referred to Moses or David, He simply accommodated Himself to the popular opinions of the day. On the other hand, the extreme conservatives have urged that unless Christ knew the facts about the literary composition of the Old Testament writings, and unless He was incapable of referring to Moses as having written a part of the Pentateuch, should Moses not have written it; then Christ was not reliable as an authority and not infallible as a teacher. Neither of these positions, held baldly, is justified by the record.

When Christ referred to the Old Testament, it was not His special purpose to give sanction to the general view about the man who may have written the record. He was not primarily concerned to endorse any view about the authorship

of the same. But His purpose was to emphasize the fact that the authority of God was in the truth of the teaching mentioned. His appeal was to the teaching as having God's sanction. This was the fact which gave significance to the reference. Now this meant that Christ counted the teachings as God-given, by the hand of whatever individual. Says Dr. Robertson Smith: "There can be no question that Jesus himself believed that God dealt with Israel in the way of special revelation, that the old Testament contains within itself a perfect picture of His gracious relations to His people, and sets forth the whole growth of the true religion up to its perfect fulness. We cannot depart from this view without making Jesus an imperfect teacher and an imperfect Saviour. Did He who said, 'No man knoweth the Father but the Son and He to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him,' did He mistake His Father for another in the pages of the Old Testament? It is incredible, incredible upon any theory of the person of Christ that can be held by Christians."

All this involves an imperative conviction that Christ recognized the historic validity of the Old Testament record. We read that "beginning at Moses and the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." The historical value of the record, which so many critics deem unimportant, must be insisted upon as we note Christ's reference to

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it. Less than this can never be satisfactory. Not that Christ endorsed every part of the record as actually accurate history; but that though there may be some parts, which we have noted, which seem to be doubtful as history, yet the general reliability of the record must stand.

But on the other hand, it will be a great mistake to lose sight of the real character of Christ's authority by claiming for it a special application to such questions as arise in the realm of Criticism. Had Christ specifically asserted authority here, the situation would be different. But He did not. His insistence upon His message is at the point where it illuminates spiritual realities and nowhere else. Here His infallible word never fails. Here He purposed that it should reveal its power as the eternal truth of God. Here He unfolded the fundamental principles underlying man's right relation to God and to his fellow-man, largely leaving the details of the application of those principles to the individual soul.

Here Christ's authority is supreme, infallible and eternal. It might have been so, doubtless, in other spheres, had He so purposed. But He gives us no ground on which to stand and theorize about what He might have done. We have what He did. There let us rest, and not detract from the clear-shining glory of His power as the living Word of God by involving His authority at points where He Himself did

not apply it. The literary questions are secondary. Christ's work was the fundamental work of giving men to see the truth of God as it shines upon the way everlasting. There it shines with growing brightness, and will unto the endless day.

Now the fact is that in thus presenting truth Christ used the Old Testament as it was in His time, and as it is in our day, with its difficulties and discrepancies. That did not mean that He accepted all of it as binding authority in His day, for He set much of it aside. We must not forget His words, considered so revolutionary by many who heard them: "Ye have heard," etc; but "I say unto you," etc. Nor must we forget His illuminating commentary upon the fact of progressive development in the moral standards set up, as revelation unfolded a higher life for the people, as He said: "For the hardness of their hearts Moses allowed," etc. Things allowed, though not acceptable to God, and now forbidden, suggesting other things which have disturbed many a reader of the old laws and practices, as in the times of the conquest: these Christ sets aside forever, as He holds up a higher standard, and reveals God's truth more fully to men.

All of which means that Christ pointed to the eternal truth in the Old Testament, as abiding authority for the spiritual life, while much of the requirement of the Scriptures

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was no longer authoritative as expressive of the will of God. The Epistle to the Hebrews and Paul's Epistles to the Romans and Galatians make this truth the more evident. Christ did not tell us all that must be set aside now; but men are agreeing as to additional items of Old Testament sanction which can no longer be supposed to be acceptable to God.

If this fact disturb men, and they say we have no authority, since each man must be a judge for himself, the only reply to make is that men are thus judging in any case, and must always do so. Take, for example, the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, accepted by Christians as being Christ's words with all His authority in them. What do we see? One man says Christ meant just exactly what He says literally, while another says He did not. Let us consider carefully this difference of opinion concerning the accepted teachings of our Lord. What does it compel us to realize regarding Christ's authority in Scripture, and the binding authority of all Scripture? It simply compels recognition of the fact that, after all, the individual interpretation must be involved in the compelling character of the teaching.

Protestantism must never yield one atom of that right of individual interpretation, for the virility of Christian character is involved in its maintenance. Men must be compelled by their appreciation of the truth which com-

strains to genuine living, to righteousness in all life and every part of it. If men ask how we are to avoid hopeless confusion by thus allowing the individual to recognize what he will as authoritative, our answer is at hand. It is in the apparent fact that, while men are thus deciding for themselves what is binding and what is not, there is a steady growth toward a consensus of judgment in the Christian Church regarding the teachings of the Master and of the Scriptures. That consensus has always been practically unanimous through the centuries regarding the fundamentals of Evangelical faith, the great foundation-truths and facts on which the living faith and strengthening life of Christians are built to-day.

As regards other teachings, supplementary and secondary, yet essential to a rounding out of the body of the truth, men are coming to see eye to eye more and more as the years pass. Take as an illustration the matter of slavery. Not very long ago good men, earnest Christians, insisted that they found divine sanction for and against this institution, and the camp was hopelessly divided. But to-day that cloud is passing. It is one of many, and time marks the clearing of the sky. But this means that the authority of the Word of God is not found in the fact that men must accept the teaching because it is in the Bible. They thought, from their different points of view, (education, prejudice, personal relations,

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all being involved,) that they both saw the authority of God for exactly the opposite conditions of life.

Therefore no mechanical acceptance of any teaching because it is in the Bible can suffice. Men must and will see the constraint of necessary truth in that teaching. Christ's teaching is not true simply because Christ said it, but He said it because it is true. Our reassurance is in the fact that men, the more they have come to independent and honest thinking, the more they desire the constraint of the truth in order to righteousness, are being brought together to a clearer judgment touching a larger reach of the truth, and all life is taking on more meaning and promising richer fruitage. This is our ground for an unshaken confidence that the Spirit who is to guide into all truth will continue to guide, taking the things of Christ and making them plain, and convicting men of sin and righteousness and judgment, and pointing to the glory of a redeemed manhood through Jesus Christ.

XXIX

THE PROBLEM OF INSPIRATION

IT is reported that ex-President Theodore Woolsey was requested, some years before his death, to prepare an article for a leading quarterly on the subject of inspiration. He positively declined on the ground of his incompetency to treat a subject so difficult. Dr. John DeWitt, for many years professor at New Brunswick Seminary, in his book *What is Inspiration*, refers to this incident, and adds: "We cannot doubt that he expressed the feeling of many of those who are best qualified to deal with such mysteries. Yet, without the slightest misgiving, they have yielded their mind, heart, and will to the Scriptures as given by the inspiration of God. Such undoubting faith is not at all inconsistent with a confessed inability to explain the divine energy by which the result was produced. . . . We may feel painfully that no theory has been propounded that relieves all the difficulties of the case, yet enjoy an unflinching confidence that the Bible is the word of God. For our confidence does not depend upon human theories concerning its production, but upon many infallible proofs of the divine origin both of the

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Old Testament and the New, and these intrinsic, wrought into their substance, and filling them with light, and life, and power." With what better words could we approach a brief consideration of this difficult subject! The last word has not yet been spoken upon it.

There have been various theories about the exact nature of the sun; but none of them altered the mighty fact that the sun has gone on shining, lighting and heating the earth, ripening harvests, drawing water for the clouds, and fulfilling its functions as the source of vitality and fruitfulness to the earth. Just so the various theories as to the exact nature of inspiration will continue to have their advocates; but the Bible will remain the inspired word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and life for men. There was a time when different schools of Christians had very definite theories of the atonement. But of late men are coming to realize that the atonement is too large a fact about which to assume to make an exact and all-sufficient definition. It must involve certain great vital essentials in God's provision of salvation through Jesus Christ for men; but not many would venture upon the temerity which would confidently assert a final definition of the atonement.

Some such feeling is growing in the Church regarding the definition of inspiration. It is a fact too large for easy definition. It is a fact attended by so many details of

minor fact as to lead the most reverent and earnest of scholars to feel that we would better put our faith in the fruit of it, as the blessed gift of God, as we do in the atonement, and not suppose that we will lose anything of the blessing because we are not ready to make a final definition of it. Let devout Christians rest in the assurance that while a definition of such facts as inspiration and the atonement cannot easily be given which will satisfy all men, yet the blessed facts themselves remain with all their glorious significance for believing souls.

This is all the more important, when we consider that many have had an erroneous idea about a definite theory of inspiration being necessary to a vital Christian faith. In his little book *Inspiration of The Scriptures*, President Patton, of Princeton, has given us a most important statement regarding this matter. Dr. Patton says: "I must take exception to the disposition on the part of some to stake the fortunes of Christianity on the doctrine of Inspiration. Not that I yield to any in profound conviction of the truth and importance of this doctrine. But it is proper for us to bear in mind the immense argumentative advantage which Christianity has, aside altogether from the inspiration of the documents on which it rests. I cannot agree with a recent writer (Garbett), when he says, 'If we take away the inspired character of the Scripture narrative, we really shall possess little more cer-

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tainty with regard to the facts of our Lord's life than we do to the facts of ancient Roman history.' This passage I cannot but look upon as too great a concession to the cause of Rationalism.

"The Christian apologist cannot meet infidel objections by assuming the doctrine of Inspiration. While the question of historical credibility is at issue, the battle must be fought on the ground of historical evidence. The romances of Strauss and Renan are triumphantly answered by proving the early origin of the Gospels. . . . Historical criticism places the Bible on a level with the most reliable human histories. Ordinary historical evidence is sufficient to satisfy us with regard to the truthfulness of statements which we find in the writings of Tacitus, Cæsar, Grote, Gibbon and Macaulay. We do not insist upon inspiration on the part of these authors as a guarantee of their credibility. Their books may contain errors. Instances of false reasoning, hasty generalization, incorrect judgment may occur in their pages, but of their *general truthfulness* we have no doubt."

Let the full force of this most important fact be pondered by all thoughtful men. Dr. Patton proceeds to show that the Bible is much more than a reliable historic document, but he advances to that consideration "from its credibility as a literary document." We have shown how Egyptian and Assyrian monuments confirm the his-

toric reliability of Old Testament records, and how the historic material of the early Christian centuries places beyond question the reliability of the New Testament. Therefore we have the Bible as reliable history, which is not dependent upon any theory of inspiration for its acceptance.

We approach this record for the purpose of inquiring into its character as the rule of faith and life for the Christian Church, and we remember that this is the Bible which is proving to be the light of life to countless men and women through the years and in all lands. We find the book claiming to be the revelation of God's plan for the redemption of the race. The necessity for this revelation is stated in the Westminster symbol thus: "Although the light of nature and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness and wisdom and power of God as to leave men inexcusable; yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of His will, which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal Himself."

This revelation purports to be in manifestations of divine presence and power, in messages through chosen spokesmen, in miracles, in providential history, and finally in the person and work of Jesus Christ, together with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the work which

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the Spirit accomplished through the Christian church in unfolding the truth to men as it is in Christ. We are told that "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. This divine "moving" would seem to have been that quickening impulse which involved revelation of truth, or illumination of truth, or sympathetic appreciation of truth, as the man was given the vision according to the Holy Spirit's purpose. But it is evident that while these writers were inspired of God, they betray the marks of human conditions and limitations. We have noted in a former chapter that all revelation has borne distinctive evidence of being accommodated to the finite weaknesses of men. Old Testament teaching was not as full or final as that of the New Testament, because men were not ready to receive it. At the earliest possible moment it appears that God gave to men clearer visions and higher standards, according as they were ready for them.

When we take a closer inspection of the book, we find it to consist of various kinds of material, historical, poetical, prophetic, ethical and religious. Moreover some of this material is manifestly intended to be given as according to the will of God, while some of it is not. For instance, much that men said and did was contrary to the will of God. The devil's lies are here recorded. The arguments of Job's would-be com-

forters are here. They have been supposed to be inspired of God simply because they are in the Bible; but God repudiated them as not acceptable to Him. It is evident, therefore, that much in the Bible is not inspired of God. The record of it is reliable, and its lesson is evident; but the words themselves are not inspired as truth, for they are not truth. It further appears that all parts of the record are not of equal importance. The Westminster symbol points out this fact thus: "All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them."

The meaning of this is evident. While all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, some parts of the Bible are more necessary than others to a knowledge of the way of salvation. Every part of it is profitable, (the accounts of man's failures as well as his obediences), and fills out the record of God's revelation to and dealings with men. Yet some of the teachings herein recorded are fundamental, while others are secondary and incidental. It logically follows that it has been more important to preserve the fundamental truths of the

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Bible than to preserve every word and letter that has been written. That is to say, the work of the Holy Spirit, who moved men to write this record, has all along involved the preservation of the vital truth, committed as it has been to human hands through the centuries.

Men sometimes ask if it be of vital importance that every word and syllable of this record shall be preserved as the original writing came from the hands of those who produced it. The answer is found in the fact that we have some fourteen hundred manuscripts of the Bible, and no two of them exactly alike. The only possible meaning of this fact is that God has not been concerned about preserving the record from the marks of human imperfection in its transmission. Let it be noted that the differences are relatively insignificant, and that all these manuscripts agree in the vital truth. It follows that while the facts teach us not to swear by the letter which killeth, we are to realize that the Spirit of the truth, which giveth life, breathes in all the various copies of the Scriptures from the beginning until now. New Testament writers generally are not careful to quote Old Testament passages verbatim; but are content to give the real meaning of the words to which they refer.

The question as to whether the existing discrepancies were in the original text, or crept in at the hands of copyists and commentators, can never be answered. The orig-

inal manuscripts are beyond our reach. The validity of inspiration cannot be impugned by any theory about the original autographs. God evidently deems the Bible as we now have it sufficiently pure for His purpose. Every day its sufficiency is demonstrated among all sorts and conditions of men. Here we rest in the confidence that we need not theorize about original manuscripts. If the present text is sufficient, an original text like unto it would be equally sufficient. We have suggested in former chapters the probable way in which inaccuracies have crept in at the hands of copyists and later commentators, and such considerations justify the opinion that the original writings were more free from error than those we have. And yet it is not essential that it should have been so. God has used fallible men to give us the infallible truth in the setting of human limitations. The infallible truth is not lost thereby.

The whole record carries an atmosphere of reliability in its spirit and method of witnessing to the truth. Paul writes in 1 Cor. ii: 12-13, "We have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Archdeacon Farrar says Paul's view of inspiration led him to make "the words of Scripture co-extensive and identical with the words of God," and that "the controversial use which he

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makes of Old Testament passages attaches consequences of the deepest importance to what an ordinary reader might regard as a mere grammatical expression." The illustration which he cites is the familiar reference of the apostle in Gal. iii: 16, where Paul argues from the singular rather than the plural form of the word "seed" in God's promise to Abraham. So when Christ says: "It is written," the reader does not distinguish the particular utterance as more accurate than any other, but recognizes the force of the teaching to be an endorsement of the divine authority that rests in all the Old Testament. We are taught in 2 Pet. i: 19-21, that "we have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, . . . knowing this first that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in the old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

In this connection attention should be called to one of the most significant facts in all Bible study. The important words in a sentence, which we may call the truth-burdened words, and which are found in all manuscripts alike, are the words which the Bible student examines with special care. Our libraries are filled with the commentaries of the centuries, and the main object of these comments is to teach us that these vitally

important words have a certain colour of meaning, a certain phase of significance, a certain delicate shade of truth, which men must understand in order to appreciate the exact mind of the Spirit of God in the teaching considered. Thus the great argument made by every commentator who ever published a book has pointed to the fact that the Holy Spirit, again and again, has conveyed to us a meaning so precise and so distinctive that no other word known to man will convey the truth so well as the one word which the men who wrote the message were inspired to use. Keeping this fact in mind, we shall be helped in the practical appreciation of the great work of inspiration as it preserves for us the revelation of God.

Having these considerations in mind, having also in mind those facts noted in the progress of our studies, in former chapters, regarding discrepancies in the text, having furthermore in mind the discussion regarding the divine authority in the Scriptures considered in the preceding chapter, we ask ourselves what sort of definition of inspiration is possible which will adequately set forth the real character of the Bible as the word of God and the infallible rule of faith and life for men? The most helpful discussion of the subject will be found in the book of Dr. DeWitt already mentioned. No difficulty is evaded, no discrepancy is denied, no moral blemish, as determined by our present

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standards, is overlooked; but every difficulty is carefully and frankly considered, and every part of the book is given its proper relation to the whole.

Dr. DeWitt's key to the whole problem is found in the definition of revelation, in unfolding which he discovers the real character of inspiration. He considers revelation from the standpoint of three questions: "What is revealed? To whom is it revealed? and With what design?" To the first question he answers: "The Bible throughout its whole extent reveals God—the living God." This revelation is not in the abstract form of philosophic thought, but "in voluntary relations with men, as a wise, righteous, and almighty moral Governor, a loving Father, and a gracious Saviour." . . . "The Revealer is Himself the revelation. No attribute of His nature is more strongly marked than that which is described by the adjective *self-revealing*. He is always manifesting Himself in aspects important to men. This was the light shining in darkness from the beginning."

Now this revelation was first of all to the prophet, and through the prophet to the people. The prophet was only partially receptive to the divine truth, and the people were much more ignorant than he. He took in what he could, and gave the people the best he had. "He saw obscurely, but he saw. Degraded heathendom must receive some glimpse of a higher divinity than

ever before recognized—a living God, a spiritual God, a personal God, a holy God; one that can see, hear, speak, promise, threaten, reward, punish, projecting Himself into the life and history of men, so far as they were capable of apprehending Him.”

When he tells us the purpose of this revelation, Dr. DeWitt declares it to be “the production of a perfect humanity.” Dealing with the moral blemishes in the Old Testament records, he follows the thought of Canon Mozley in asserting that “a religion from God, embodying the highest conception, and opening up before men a glorious future of knowledge, purity, love, and blessedness in divine fellowship, must be revealed progressively. If it had been at once proclaimed in its higher and purer form, men in their moral darkness and degradation could not have received it. It must come to them through their own moral atmosphere, and modified by its obstructions, misapprehensions, and confusion on all ethical questions. It could only be apprehended gradually, as accommodated to the prepossessions which must for an indefinite time shut out the perfected and absolute truth and right. So modified, it might by degrees effect a moral transformation, rectify unworthy conceptions of God, elevate the ethical standard, and lift the race to a higher plane. From this vantage ground a fresh revelation of justice, holiness, and love of God as crystallized in a perfect man, the

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representative head of redeemed humanity, could be apprehended, appreciated, embraced, and absorbed, and thus the whole mass should be changed into the image of God in all moral perfections."

This view recognizes a mixture of the true and false, and a temporary accommodation in matters of justice, love, and truth to the infirmities of men. This process is justified because it is looking forward and upward all the time. Christ said it was for the hardness of men's hearts that Moses allowed that which was not pleasing to God. The Lord Himself now lifts men to the higher level. A progressive revelation must be judged by its end. Human nature makes it inevitable, and human progress in its light is its vindication.

After showing how the fulness of the perfect revelation is in Jesus Christ, Dr. DeWitt gives us the following definition of inspiration: "Inspiration is a special energy of the Spirit of God upon the mind and heart of selected and prepared human agents which does not obstruct nor impair their native and normal activities, nor miraculously enlarge the boundaries of their knowledge, except where essential to the inspiring purpose; but stimulates and assists them to the clear discernment and faithful utterance of truth and fact, and when necessary brings within their range truth or fact which could not otherwise have been known. By such direction and aid,

through spoken or written words, in combination with any divinely ordered circumstances with which they may be historically interwoven, the result contemplated in the purpose of God is realized in a progressive revelation of His wisdom, righteousness, and grace for the instruction and moral education of men.

“The revelation so produced is permanent and infallible for all matters of faith and practice; except so far as any given revelation may be manifestly partial, provisional, and limited in its time and conditions, or may be afterwards modified or superseded by a higher and fuller revelation, adapted to an advanced period in the redemptive process to which all revelation relates as its final end and glorious consummation. No proposed definition of God’s inspiring grace can be accepted as complete unless it has been formulated (1) in the light of the grand central truth in which inspiration and revelation alike culminate, that Jesus Christ as a person, ‘the only-begotten of the Father,’ is the final, perfect, and the only perfect revelation of God to men; and (2) with due regard to the radical difference between the words of Christ, who is Himself the truth, and those of all inspired teachers, as between the primary and every secondary source of divine knowledge and authority. All historic, prophetic, and didactic revelation of God in the inspired Books of the Old and New Testament, is inferior and subordinate to

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His revelation of personal truth and grace in the Christ of the historic Gospels; and whatsoever the former may contain that is incongruous therewith, whatever be the explanation of its incongruity, is not to be held as authoritative for us, but is virtually superseded, as an imperfect and provisional inspiration."

Such is the definition which is quoted in full as one than which it would be difficult to produce a better. It gathers up into itself those statements about all the perplexing problems which are relevant, and discriminates each one in a most effective manner. Let men determine their conception of the Bible in the light of this definition, and old-time difficulties will disappear, and the clear-shining truth will become increasingly luminous. Approaching thus to Christ as the final Teacher of the truth, we repeat our confidence concerning the increase of His authority in the minds and hearts of men, because we behold the growing number of His faithful followers seeing eye to eye more clearly, and more earnestly following His will. In the highest and truest sense, therefore, men are finding this Bible to be the inspired word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and life, now and for all time.

XXX

THE ABIDING WORD OF GOD

WE have noted the movement of modern Criticism through about two hundred years. In many of the great centres of human learning the Bible has been cast aside in unbelief. Men who have been counted proficient in human wisdom have never learned that "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" are found in Jesus Christ. Yet during these same two centuries wonderful streams of life have flowed out to the world from this Bible. Out of Germany came the Moravians carrying the light of life to men dying in the darkness of sin. Out of Great Britain and America went the missionary movements which girdle the earth to-day with lines of light and blessing. Within these centuries the great Bible Societies of Christendom have sent out millions of copies of the Scriptures, without note or comment, and immortal souls have been saved unto God through the instrumentality of the inspired Word. Never in all the years was the Bible so evidently the power of God and the wisdom of God unto the salvation of men.

There are many instances recorded of the sav-

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ing power of the truth, but none more remarkable than the following has come to the writer's knowledge. Recently the Rev. Eugene P. Dunlap, D.D., of Bangkok, Siam, a missionary in that country for twenty-five years under the Presbyterian Board, and a man most highly honoured by all who know him, related this incident in New York City. A few years ago Dr. Dunlap learned that the Lieutenant Governor of one of the provinces in the Malay Peninsula was a Christian believer, though the man had never met a Christian before his conversion. Dr. Dunlap sought him out, was welcomed with the exclamation—"Hosanna!" and heard from the man's own lips the remarkable story of his life. At the age of forty he was still a worshipper of idols, but at that time, while engaged in making some new idols with his own hands, he stopped in his work to ponder the wonderful structure of the human hand, with its capacities and power. Then the thought widened to the appreciation of the creative power in the universe. Calling his wife, they reasoned together and agreed that it was folly to worship the creatures of their own hands.

Gathering together their idols, they destroyed all of them, and returning to the room which had long been set apart as a place of worship, they asked themselves what or whom they should worship. Reasoning along the line of their new convictions, these new worshippers determined

henceforth to give the allegiance of their souls to The Greatest in the Universe, and for thirty years they entered daily into their sanctuary and worshipped Him, of whom Paul writes: "The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." With sincere hearts they strove to do that which was in keeping with the law written upon their hearts, all the time longing for more light which would give them intelligent and adequate conceptions of the unknown God. They were "without excuse" regarding idolatry, but they did not yet know God as God would have men know Him.

The allotted threescore years and ten were spent, but at the age of seventy years he heard of a man who was selling a wonderful book said to contain the truth. Impelled by a strange confidence, he sought out this man and asked about the character of the book. For reply he was told it revealed The Greatest Being in the Universe to men. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "I want that book!" Hurrying to his home, he sat down with his wife on the very verandah where Dr. Dunlap heard his story, and together they read the book from the beginning to the end, day after day. When they came to the record of Paul's address at Mars Hill, he said: "Wife, we have been in Athens for these thirty years!" The knowledge of God in all the

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fulness of the revelation which culminates in Christ flooded their souls with an unspeakable joy.

When the old man finished his story, he opened a silver box on the table, and took from it a paper which was much worn, and said: "Here is my faith. People ask me what I believe, and I have written it out on this paper." With profound interest, Dr. Dunlap took the statement to discover what would be the faith of a man, with nothing but the open Bible in his hand, and the guidance of the Spirit of God. The paper contained every vital essential to the Evangelical Christian faith. The Lieutenant Governor and his wife had been living in exact accord with the teachings of the New Testament, joyful Christians, and faithful witnesses for Christ to their fellow-men. For the people round about him the Old Testament reflected their moral status, in its descriptions of the idolatrous nations in Israel's time. But for himself, as he moved through the Old Testament, finding it quite up to date for most of the people of Siam in its restrictions, he followed the hope of Israel into the New Testament fulfillment, and found the old and partial superseded and filled full in the new and completed revelation of God and His will in Jesus Christ.

This is our Bible, and sufficient "lamp to our feet, and light to our path." Says Dr. DeWitt: "It sweeps over the vast spaces

that separate us from man's first existence upon the earth. No subtle illusions, no ingenious sophistries, no artful disguises that error or wickedness may assume, no fog-banks of falsehood and wrong can withstand its penetrative gleam. This light of life illumines all history. It tests all that the busy brain of man has conceived, or his hands have wrought. It is 'living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of both the joints and the marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.' " As it proved the Bread of Life to the nobleman of Siam, so it is proving to be to thousands of men in every land and clime. Now as ever, the secret of all regeneration and the progress of all redemption is in the fact that men are "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

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